



THE SATURDAY REVIEW

No. 4061. Vol. 156
FOUNDED 1865

26 AUGUST, 1933

SIXPENCE

REGISTERED AS A NEWSPAPER

CONTENTS

NOTES OF THE WEEK ...	PAGES 213-217	SERIAL—THE SURRENDER OF AN EMPIRE—Mrs. Neta H. Webster ...	PAGES 226-227
THE NAVY OF TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW—III— Captain Bernard Acworth, R.N. ...	218	HORATIO BOTTOMLEY—W. Echallaz ...	228
CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND THE CRISIS—NO ILLUSIONS —Robert Machray ...	219	NEW NOVELS ...	229
ENGLAND IN THE AIR—V—Lord Halsbury ...	220	PSYCHOLOGY OF THE THRILLER—Malcolm Elwin ...	230
BIRDS OF DEATH—J. Wentworth Day ...	221	REVIEWS ...	231
LETTERS FROM A CANDID CRITIC—III—TO MR. BALDWIN ...	222-223	TO BOMB OR NOT ...	232
THE FEEL OF A ROD—Guy C. Pollock ...	223	CORRESPONDENCE ...	233
FINANCING THE WHITE PAPER—Hamish Blair ...	224	CITY ...	234
SHORT STORY—O GIVE ME ONE!—Anne Armstrong ...	224-225	FILMS ...	235
		ACROSTIC ...	236
		BROADCASTING ...	236

Notes of the Week

There was no defence in the Senate of the Irish Free State against the charges of bad faith brought against de Valera for his vigorous suppression of the Blue Shirts. How could there be? Behind—and above—Eamon de Valera stands the I.R.A., which is armed, which holds parades and marches openly, an illegal military organisation which exists to turn Ireland, by bloodshed and terrorism, into a Republic of slaves. How could a much cleverer casuist than de Valera justify the proscription of the Blue Shirts, while the I.R.A. goes unmolested? Of course de Valera dare not touch the I.R.A. For how much longer he dare thwart or postpone their full Republican programme remains to be seen. Meanwhile, he has General O'Duffy rather more than less by the scruff of the neck. O'Duffy spoke too soon.

**

We have said before that, as a fasting man, Mahatma Gandhi is a miserable amateur, when the still incomparable Succi and the old Aquarium are remembered. But Succi never thought of making a mighty Empire look foolish by his abstinence from food. Gandhi, on the other hand, has done it repeatedly and his latest exploit is not the least of his successes. Arrested on August 4 and sentenced to a year's imprisonment for incitements to illegal acts, he has now been released unconditionally because he threatened, so to speak, to die on the Viceroy's doorstep. It is difficult to understand why Delhi or Whitehall should care at all whether Gandhi

Fast
and
Loose

did or did not choose to commit suicide for purposes of his own, for it is not to be believed that his self-ordained demise would weaken at all our waning power and prestige in India. It is impossible to understand why the Government should put Gandhi in prison if they mean to let him out directly he grows ill from fasting. That sort of thing is an avowal of weakness and folly, worthy of the worst kind of Irwinism. Which is to say a great deal.

**

The latest antic of Moscow is, on the face of it, ludicrous and comic. The idea of a sort of Children's OGPU, an infantile police or detective force, in which small boys and girls earn rewards for "capturing" desperate villains in the form of peasants who cut an ear of corn or lift a potato from the fields, belongs to farce. In any sane order of things these precocious Inquisitors would be spanked and birched. But it is not impossible to understand that in Soviet Russia they may wield a real kind of terrorism, and farce shows its latent tragedy. One remembers the Soviet beggar children of some years ago, riddled with venereal disease, and holding up the traveller with, "Your money or my disease." It is long since Youth was young in Russia.

**

It was in the past a French privilege to indulge in picturesque strikes. There was usually something a little different in labour troubles across the Channel. To-day the Seine barges have shown that the tradition is not forgotten. They have applied imagination to the methods

Strikes
à la
Française

chosen to annoy the bourgeoisie and hit upon the glorious idea of holding up all traffic on the Seine by a dam of barges. Of course in due time the gendarmes cleared it away. It would certainly seem that a respect for authority has been increasing, for not a single gendarme is reported as injured or even ducked, and the gendarmes are the most unpopular people in the country. It is to be hoped that the barge strike will not be as fatally effective as the Seine steamer strike before the war. Until that strike the Seine steamboats were perhaps the most popular form of transport in Paris. Then the men went out and the "bateaux mouches" lay idle for weeks and weeks. It took years for them to recover a fraction of their old popularity.

Certainly the most spectacular strikes ever known in Paris were those organised by M. Pataud, who ruled his electricians' union with a rod of iron. When M. Pataud said the word, all the lights in the theatres, cafés, shops, streets and houses of the centre of Paris went out without a note of warning. Everyone had to lay in a stock of candles to be stuck in the necks of bottles when M. Pataud was pleased to show that he was displeased. His comic tyranny lasted a year or two, but unhappily the King of Electric Light led a gay life on the union funds and was caught out. One of his followers attacked him on the Boulevard and beat him—with an umbrella. That was the end of poor M. Pataud.

It is not too comforting to be told that, when the London Passenger Transport Board has completed its standardisation of fares, "the public as a whole will not lose." If the public does not gain, individually and collectively, its enthusiasm for a monopolistic dictatorship of transport, not very burning even now, will wane or vanish. The Traffic Board, having stifled that free competition between companies and services which once kept fares down and efficiency up, may give to London the transport of its dreams—cheap, luxurious, and uncongested. If it does not the public will revert to its character as taxpayer and wonder whether the vast salaries and large compensations of the Board were just, necessary, or even expedient.

The Rural District Councils' Association has suggested a Moveable Dwellings and Camping Bill to regulate the holiday makers' camps and caravans. It is not proposed that the measure should affect gipsies who may excuse the nuisance they are to many country people by the lesson in open air life they give to all. Heaven

Public Rights and Wrongs

Camps and Caravans

knows we have enough regulation as it is and no one desires the creation of a new army of inspectors, but it is true that the townsman on holiday can make himself an unconscionable nuisance. Surely the inspector could be avoided and the country people protected by a general stiffening of the regulations that forbid a man to make himself a nuisance to a neighbour whether temporary or not. Litter should be suppressed with Draconian penalties and damage sternly punished. Moreover, consideration for others should be enforced. A village not so long ago was demanding the life-blood of the Chief Scout, because some of his campers were exercising their lungs round a camp fire up to an hour at which the men who had to be up at dawn next day should have been asleep.

The last generation would have been amazed to read a serious debate in the correspondence columns of the *Thunderer* concerning lawn tennis—not tennis, mind you, but the once despised "pat-ball." Much ink and paper have been used to show that the right to a fault is or is not an abuse, and that the game would be improved or spoiled, if the server were allowed no more than a single delivery. As a matter of fact, the arguments on both sides seem to show that it would make very little difference to the game if the rules were changed or not, consequently it would appear best to leave them as they are. But is not all this solemn discourse about a game childish and undesirable? Never in our history have games been regarded as of such terrible account as at the present time. Body line bowling becomes an Imperial problem. The rules of lawn tennis assume a vital importance. It is all part of the expert development of games in which the game is not the end, but the mere accident of winning it. When people played as well as they could without any professional coaching, they enjoyed their games just as much as the young folk of to-day. Marbles seems to be one of the few games left for the player who does not take his games too seriously and that will probably be professionalised in the near future.

If the B.B.C. must quarrel with the theatrical profession or the theatrical profession with the B.B.C., neither the listener (who is many) nor the theatre-goer (who is few), can help it or himself. But both can, and do, regret these ructions which are always sure of a sustained publicity. The B.B.C. is rich, but not always so markedly popular. The theatre is poor and very much under the weather. They are natural allies, unnatural enemies; and this silly warfare bores all of us and injures both of them.

Sound and Fury

Television is making strides. A boxing programme of two bouts was broadcast the other night and people were able to watch and see from their armchairs these pugilistic contests. It is true that the figures shown on the screen were diminutive, but the noises were terribly realistic. Certainly it would be far more agreeable to watch most of our highly advertised fights from the study. There would be no need to take a long journey to see two men fight for a limited number of seconds in order that the issue should be decided by a foul. But in that case what will happen to the vast amounts of money engaged in these affairs? Presumably they will disappear and we shall return to real boxing again. Then more power to television of the noble art!

Fists and Wireless

The relics of the city state that still survive are bound to command a sentimental sympathy. Our great Empires have not been so successful that they can afford to ignore the lessons of the city-states of Hellas and Italy and the minute has as much claim to respect as the big. The politics of Andorra are confused enough, but no one in this country would regard with equanimity the disappearance of the little mountain state's qualified independence. Actually the Andorrans seem determined to uphold their rights and if they are obstinate enough, "the invading army" of French gendarmes if it can be so described will have to retire.

City States

Since 800 A.D. according to tradition that other mountain State San Marino has maintained its independence. It remains probably the only Free Trade State which benefits by Protection: for it knows no tariff barriers, though it recovers from the Italian state a percentage of all duties levied in proportion to its population. Now, it is said, its isolation is to be attacked by a railway. One fears that this will be the end of real Sammarinese history.

For a long time past the old-established piano manufacturers have regarded the gramophone as their real enemy, and the radio as but an irritation. There are signs now of the radio getting on top of the gramophone in the little war between the two, leaving the path clearer to the new baby-grand of 4ft. 3 inches. Anyway, piano sales, a fair index of prosperity like light cars, are going up month by month. A great banker confirms bettering trade returns, too: his branch managers in industrial areas permit themselves to talk prosperity. What would do more to promote a spurt this autumn than fifty soothing Ministerial (especially Prime Ministerial) utterances or any

Swallows of Prosperity

new world conference is a cut in standard income tax. Incidentally, it would go far to induce foreigners to settle here and Southern Irish loyalists to migrate here. All that means new employment. Only the Socialist believes men will work for nothing or for the good of humanity.

One of the first results of the new atomic theories, in which atoms are considered as having wave-like properties, was the discovery of a different form of the element hydrogen. Water, as every school-boy knows, is a chemical compound, a sort of ash of hydrogen. The American chemists, Lewis and Macdonald, have recently obtained a small quantity of water containing only the new hydrogen variant. And very strange stuff it seems to be. For the most purposes, it is indistinguishable from ordinary water: but it is 10 per cent. denser, it freezes at 39 deg. F., its boiling point is 3 deg. F. higher than ordinary water, and needs much more heat before it boils away. In a word, although chemically identical it is physically quite different. It would be extremely expensive stuff to buy or to prepare.

At the concluding meetings of the World Power Conference, held suitably enough in Norway, some extremely interesting figures were quoted. Thus it appears that the total water power of the world is equivalent, roughly, to about 2,000 million tons of coal per year and that at present only about one fourteenth of it is used. It was also claimed that coal and oil power would be exhausted within two or three hundred years, while the timber supply of America would fail within the lifetime of the present generation. To most people, faced with their electricity accounts, the most tantalising figure given was that the average cost of production of Norwegian electric power was about a twentieth of a penny per unit. In spite of this, last year, the electric supply of Norway was run at a loss.

A grand mock dog-fight is being staged at Clay Cross. Mr. Arthur Henderson, the Grand Old Grampus of Geneva, is tub-thumping the constituency and kissing the babies to the tune of "No more War." He also says that if there is war no one should be allowed to make private profit. This is a paradox which only a Socialist could produce with seriousness.

The Clay Cross Currents

Comrade Harry Pollitt, lap-dog of Lenin, is singing the Hymn of Hate and fratricidal warfare. Mr. Pollitt does not perhaps suggest actively that the local miners should murder their masters. But

none the less Mr. Pollitt is a Communist. And Communism comes from Russia where the miners did actually murder their masters. When they had finished the last of the masters they appointed new masters from among themselves. The new masters then murdered the miners who elected them. They are still doing so. There is no close season in Russia. So Mr. Pollitt is perhaps not a very happy influence among the half-pay, half-time miners of Clay Cross.

Then there is Mr. Moores. Mr. Moores is a local man. He calls himself a "National." He sings the praises of the National Government. The National Government will have nothing to do with him—that is, officially. But the *Times* reports Mr. Moores' speeches fully. It all looks very queer.

Naturally Henderson will win. What is the moral to be drawn from this? The obvious answer is that the Disarmament Conference has failed. Mr. Henderson knows it. He is going to lose his job at Geneva. The Palace will be shut up. So he is coming back to the House, back to politics, probably as leader of the Opposition. Thus he will try to cover up the failure of the latest and most pernicious of Mr. Macdonald's Conferences. But meanwhile he is telling Clay Cross that every vote cast against him is a vote in favour of War. Could political humbug go further?

* *

Japan has thrown out Lord Marley. He and his pro-Russian, anti-War propaganda are not wanted in the Land of the Mikado. Japan, the greatest realist in the East, realises that anti-war pacifists and disarmament doctrinaires are the surest sowers of the seeds of War. So she is taking no chances. Lord Marley has been moved on. America has done the same thing with other delegates of this Russia-inspired so-called anti-War Conference.

There is a moral in this. Both countries are governed by men of hard common-sense who are determined to put their own countries first on the map. That is why Japan is not only capturing our trade in the East but building an Empire which one day may well threaten the supremacy of the West. America is rising from the ashes of disaster with a speed which, if maintained and consolidated, will be without parallel in national re-building. Mussolini has made a first-class power out of a third-rate Nation. His new Italy, spiritually and materially, shows already a stamina which may well stay the course.

These men build well. They build strongly and ruthlessly. They have no room, and still less time, for those who preach defeatism, internationalism, Socialism, pacifism, or any of the other traitorous "isms" which are the dry rot in the English oak to-day.

It is time we cut out the rot and threw out the rotters. Lord Marley and his colleagues should not be allowed to land in this country when they return. Let them be moved on. Their spiritual home is Russia. Their temporal home should be Moscow. England is sick of Marleys, Macdonalds, Maxtons and the rest of the Marxian tribe.

* *

In certain public schools games are invading the peace of Sunday. Probably most parents and boys

The Day of Rest

will sympathise with Bishop Well-ton's criticism of this innovation. It is not that religious observances will suffer from athletics. Chapel will still play its usual part in the school life, whether boys play games on Sunday afternoons or not. Incidentally, many old public school boys will agree with the Bishop's contention that the occasions of worship or prayer should not be unduly multiplied for fear of creating "a certain distaste in the boys' minds for the spiritual side of their school lives." The real objection to Sunday games is the banishment of the only leisure that the boy enjoys. All the rest of the week is organised to excess; at least one day in seven should be allowed him to employ his own initiative. The idea that boys must be occupied in formal tasks or games every minute of their time to keep them from evil ways is an exploded fallacy.

* *

Our pacifists are not at all happy at this moment. The Nazis in Germany have upset their apple-cart with a vengeance. Almost they

The Strong Man Armed

might regret our practical demonstration of disarmament, since they expect us to speak loudly and firmly to nations armed to the teeth. Thus the *Manchester Guardian* has published an alarming letter concerning the re-arming of Germany and the training of the youth to war. If the *Manchester Guardian* had had its way, France would have had no army to keep the peace and check this threat to Europe. It is amusing to note that the same paper does not at all like the idea of Signor Mussolini acting as mediator between Germany and Austria. It is all for vigorous action on the part of France and this country and comically make its goal the reference to the League of Nations of the problem.

* *

The fatal accident to four Eton masters once again brings home the danger to even the best

The Toll of the Mountain

amateur climbers of mountaineering without guides. They seem to have depended on their "crampons," the serrated metal of their boots, which will hold on an ice-slope if the snow is not too deep, and to have made no attempt to cut steps in the ice wall they were about to descend.

If they had had a guide with them, almost certainly he would have known the danger they were facing. It is always the principle of the greatest guides to regard the mountains with a reverence which forbids them to take any avoidable risks. They are fully aware of the glorious adventure of seeking the heights, but as they spend their lives in that adventure they know that the mountains never forgive carelessness. As fate would have it, one of the greatest living guides met his end on a mountain almost at the same time as the Eton masters. In his case there can be no doubt that Nature defeated all that human skill and experience could devise.

* *

Two things stand out in American national life according to shrewd journalistic opinion over there. For the first time the United States has become a nation. The old cynicisms of State jealousy are dead momentarily, and unless Roosevelt is upset in his stride permanently so. Only five or six years ago, in the solid South, Confederate flags were the only true flag to many Southerners: "Dixie" the national anthem; in 1917-18 North Carolinians were induced to join up in the mountainous districts to fight the Yankee. France as the actual battleground was a distinct shock. Behind all this lie the immense dictatorial powers of the President, latent as yet and in reserve. These go far beyond those of Hitler or Mussolini. And none doubts in Washington that if the issue is forced these powers will be used.

* *

Mr. Justice Humphreys had wise and pertinent things to say, during the Fire Conspiracy Trial, about the intolerable strain thus placed on jurors and the possible means of its avoidance. But he could not well speak of the strain placed on Judges and the necessity, apparent in such a case as this, of being able to make the highest legal talent available for the Bench. Yet the Judge might well be linked with the Jury. The Jury are not paid at all; the Judges have been forced to accept "cuts" in salary, for all the world as if they were the servants of Parliament, and not (as they rightly are) endowed with a very real independence. But it is obvious that if these "cuts" are not restored the Bench will no longer be recruited from the best sources. Even before any cuts were made the salaries of the Judges belonged to a time when money went much further, while they meant heavy financial sacrifice (offset, of course, by position and security) for any law officer or fashionable "silk" who was raised to the Bench. When the cuts were made, all the true arguments were for an increase in judicial salaries, and Mr. Baldwin's curt obstinacy becomes more, not less, incomprehensible the more the whole question is studied.

The Brand New World

The Trials of Judges

The beer and spirit drinker may be as much interested as the agriculturist in the explanation of a distilling authority of why the Highland whisky producers are averse to buying their malting barley from home farmers in any quantity. His reply is that whisky, to sell at all, must be of absolutely level and guaranteed quality. This the English and, more so, the Scottish climate effectually denies to our crops: whereas Hungarian barley is assured of the sun at the right time. No distiller dare gamble on such a "future" as our harvest. A Norwich brewer, from his angle, offers a parallel account of the known attitude of his firm to the problem. The countryman, like the Londoner, prefers a "bright" beer: by brightness is meant sparkle against the light, and brews from our heavier barley somehow don't carry conviction. Just so, home cheddar cheese is coloured for some city markets, playing up to popular palates. Politically, however, "the Trade" makes a mistake in not allying itself firmly, even at a higher cost, to Agriculture.

* *

The Independent Order of Rechabites (Salford Unity) Temperance Friendly Society has been holding its 56th Movable Conference in London. There has been little jubilation concerning the progress of the teetotal movement, and the less said about Prohibition in the United States the better. However, Brother T. Allsop—the name has an agreeable savour—High Superintendent of Juvenile Tents, while admitting that there had been a falling off in the number of youthful Rechabites, boldly proclaimed "I have visualised a world without drink." Presumably he had been dreaming of the Sahara, but there was no doubt a deal of commonsense in his suggestion that they should get hold of the children, as every child is a potential teetotaler.

* *

Simon Went Himself

Simon went himself and saw,
From Calcutta to Lahore,
How much trouble was in store
For a country which forbore
To rule as we had ruled before;
Pillage, anarchy and gore,
Hatred and religious war.
So this statesman, good and true,
Repudiated Montague,
Said that t'would be madness to
Give to a seditious few
Power to plot and plan and do.
Such a man, you may have thought,
Would have opposed a scheme so fraught
With snares and dangers of the sort
Which he had put in his report.
If this you really thought, you ought
To hurry to a health resort.
Let others their abuses shower;
He would rather stay in power. L.L.

The Navy of To-Day And To-Morrow

III—The Function of the Battlefleet

By Captain Bernard Acworth, R.N.

IN the two preceding articles attention was drawn to the urgency of an adequate fleet of cruisers for the defence of our enormous sea-borne trade. Trade Defence is, however, one aspect only of the responsibilities of the Navy, though the most important one. In addition to the defence of our merchant fleets, the Navy is responsible for the safe passage of our army across the seas, should its despatch to any part of the world become at any time necessary. Security against invasion is provided by the Navy, though in these days, with the Nation utterly dependent upon sea-borne food and fuel, there could be little object in invading this Island.

The three defensive aspects of the Navy may therefore be summarised as follows:—

1. Defence of the Nation's food and fuel.
2. Protection of the Army and Air Force on the High Seas and the subsequent defence of their supplies and reinforcements.
3. Defence against invasion, an unlikely enterprise on the part of an opponent.

There remains its ultimate object, which is essentially aggressive—the bending of the will of England's opponents which, by being opposed to our own will, is the cause of war. The means of overcoming the enemy's will at sea is by that economic pressure which we call blockade. Indeed, the chief purpose of the British Navy may be defined as the power to blockade an opponent, while maintaining our own sea communications.

A Mobile Citadel

In all three cases of defence, and for maintaining an effective blockade, cruisers are the instruments, but instruments which can only be steadily effective provided their activities rest upon an undefeated battle fleet consisting of ships which are capable of engaging successfully any ships which the enemy can bring against them. The Battle Fleet is, in fact, the mobile citadel of effective sea-power from which the relatively lightly armed cruisers and smaller vessels derive their power to keep the sea, and upon which they can retire, or by which they can be reinforced, in the event of a hostile concentration.

Let us consider, briefly, the sequence of events in the case of the blockade of a hostile country. Before the advent of the submarine, and especially since the advent of steam which eliminates the hazards of weather of the days of sail, blockade could be made as simple as it could be absolutely effective. Cruisers cruising off enemy ports could intercept, search and capture every vessel attempting to run the blockade. If the enemy concentrated superior force to drive off the blockading cruisers, they could retire on the battle fleet and return to their duties. In all naval campaigns there have been many vicissitudes, and by skill and daring our opponents in the past have, from

time to time, been able to inflict losses on our light blockading fleets. But as the campaign proceeds, the necessity of facing the British battle fleet will grow until it reaches a point when it can no longer be avoided if the blockaded nation is to avoid economic ruin and breakdown. When the action between the opposing battle fleets is joined, complete and decisive victory to either side establishes that "command of the sea," which is tentative, and conditional only, so long as both battle fleets are "in Being" and in fighting trim.

The doctrine that by the maintenance "in Being" of a materially superior fleet, the fruits of victory can be obtained without decisive action, is a heresy for which we have to thank Lord Fisher.

The Fleet in Being

The advent of the submarine has undoubtedly complicated the execution of blockade, making it necessary to extend the range at which blockading cruisers can operate, but the principles remain unchanged and a battle fleet action will again prove the climax of the campaign, just as Napoleon was defeated, not at Waterloo, but at Trafalgar.

Having alluded to the doctrine of "the Fleet in Being," which governed our last campaign at sea, it may be well to be a little more explicit. It has been maintained that the failure of the German fleet to engage the British fleet after Jutland, notwithstanding their three North Sea sweeps, gave to this country the fruits of victory without victory.

It is apt to be overlooked, however, that the German fleet, "In Being" in its harbours, constituted a perpetual threat, which necessitated the concentration until the Armistice of the vast Armada at Scapa, a threat which prevented us from dispersing the fleet, and especially those cruisers and smaller craft which were urgently needed for convoy against the great submarine campaign which the comparative failure of Jutland fathered. Our Fleet, it is true, remained "In Being," but so did the smaller German fleet which effectually immobilised our greater battle fleet.

To sum the matter up. The battle fleet is the foundation of sustained, and therefore effective, sea-power. The units of the battle fleet must consist of vessels of sufficient fighting power and resistance to enable those who man them to face their opposite numbers with the certainty that, by superior skill and determination, they can obtain victory.

From the material standpoint, therefore, our future battleships must mount guns of adequate calibre, which does not necessarily mean the heaviest guns that can be designed; they must have a range capable of engaging the enemy at any practicable fighting range, and they must have adequate protection to enable them to receive punishment for a considerable time without succumbing, as did our battle cruisers at Jutland, to a few luckily placed hits,

Czechoslovakia and the Crisis—No Illusions

By Robert Machray

Prague, August 19.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA is the sounding board or, to vary the figure a little, the whispering gallery of Europe. Its western part, the ancient Kingdom of Bohemia, lies like a huge Slav peninsula thrust well out in the sea of German territory. Its central portions abut on Poland under the Carpathians in the north and on Austria and Hungary towards the Danube in the South. Its eastern province borders on Roumania. Its general geographical situation immediately indicates and indeed stresses its high political significance. It is in fact the centre—if such a queer shaped country can be spoken of as a centre—not only of Central Europe, but of the Continent. And responsive to every sound and listening even to every whisper in Prague, its capital.

Scarcely fifteen years have passed since Prague became the capital of the newly-constituted State of Czechoslovakia, but it had been famous for centuries as the capital of Bohemia, and is full of historic interest. By the side of its old churches, palaces, monuments, and twisting labyrinthine streets, there has grown up an extremely modern, up-to-date city of business, learning, art, literature, pleasure and, above all, of politics.

An Up-to-Date City

To-day the population of Prague, reaching out for a million, is twice as large as it was before the War. It is an active, alert, rather gay, highly intelligent population; more than that, it is well-educated and thoroughly well-informed. The number of its illiterates must be exceedingly small. Numerous daily papers, in several editions, are published here—the list of them is simply surprising, and of course they represent every shade of political opinion. On the bookstands are English, French, German, Italian, Austrian, Hungarian, Russian and Yugoslav papers. You see, then, that Prague is a Great European as well as Czechoslovak city.

Long ago Prague was called "the Golden," and during the past week of brilliant sunshine the epithet has been well deserved in a meteorological sense. But it is not golden in a more literal sense, for it suffers greatly from the world depression. Yet deeper than that depression, wider and touching every issue of its life, is a grim shadow—it is the shadow, which shows no sign of shrinking, far less of disappearing, that is cast by Hitlerite Germany. It must be remembered that out of a population for the whole State of fifteen millions, not far short of four millions are German. True, they are natives of Czechoslovakia, but are Germans none the less. Hitler's gospel of the "Third Reich" includes them all!

Beside its native-born Germans, Czechoslovakia is encompassed on the west by Germans; and Austria is close enough in all conscience. Vienna is only a few miles away from Bratislava, the capital of the Slovak part of the country. Every-

thing that happens in Germany or Austria has its swift repercussion, therefore, first in Prague, and then throughout the whole republic. Every provocative speech of Habicht in Munich is heard in Czechoslovakia almost as soon as it is uttered.

It is perhaps still too much to say that every Czechoslovak realises to the full that in all probability he will be called on, *within the next two or three years*, to fight for his country against Germany, but the leaders of the Czechoslovak people and the great bulk of the population do realise it. They know that Germany is rearming and growing more powerful daily from the military point of view; with them this is *not a matter of opinion, but of knowledge—absolute certainty*.

On the other hand, it is not too much to say that the Czechoslovaks have been completely disillusioned respecting the efficacy of international conferences. They have now seen that the "Great Conferences," beginning with that at Genoa and closing for the present with the World Monetary and Economic Conference at London, have issued in abject failure.

A Confession of Failure

They do not now believe that the Disarmament Conference will come to any happier conclusion; in fact they see in Mr. Henderson's return to British politics, as an active member of the Labour Party, a practical confession that he has abandoned all hope of the success of that Conference, and is only too well aware that war is on the way! And as for any good that could come out of the Four Power Pact they are so sceptical as to hold up that instrument to unrestrained and, as I think, well merited ridicule. They point to that stupid, little business of the *démarche* in Berlin a fortnight or so ago and smile derisively. What is perhaps worst of all, they have lost faith in very large measure in the League of Nations. In a word they believe—for once agreeing with Signor Mussolini—that the age of conferences is past. But what is to take their place? It is a very grave question. Before attempting an answer, at least so far as Czechoslovakia is concerned, there is one point I feel I must touch on. It is not a pleasant matter for a Briton to find the Prime Minister of his country to be held abroad at such a big discount as is Mr. Ramsay MacDonald. He is so completely discredited since the failure of the World Conference in London as to represent almost a total loss to England! I was asked more than once why Mr. Baldwin didn't get rid of him!

Putting conferences aside as vain and the League of Nations as practically hopeless in the crisis precipitated by Hitlerism, Czechoslovakia feels that war almost must come, but she also feels entire confidence that when it does she will not stand alone in it; that France will be by her side, whatever happens—as also will Poland. I wonder if in England they realise in the very least just how far this crisis has gone and its probable implications.

England in the Air—V.

By Lord Halsbury

AS already indicated in preceding articles it is urgently desirable to subsidise pilots themselves in order to keep them in the air both as possible reserves and also as very real proselytisers. In order to do that two courses are necessary:—

- (a) Subsidise people not only to take their tickets, but to keep them in the air for a reasonable time (say for three years).
- (b) Carefully select the people that we will be ready to take into such a scheme. It is a plan which would appeal to all and sundry, but we must be quite certain that we only take those whom we want.

From personal experience I have known so many who have said, in a boyish spirit of optimism, that they want to take up flying, and after an hour over the aerodrome have lost all real desire to go on, and have gradually dropped out. In other words they possess no natural "flair for flying." This type is no good to us. After nearly twenty years of flying and knowing what has happened, I am sure that in order to pick the right men, we must take them for a minimum of 3 long-distance flights, such, for example as London-Hull, London-Cardiff, London-Paris and back.

During that distance in a modern, very fast machine, making them see the country they are going over and how they are going over it, it will be possible to enlist the type of pilot required for this scheme and thereby produce a real nucleus of "full-out" amateur pilots, who will continue to ensure that this country shall be "air-minded." At the present moment there are a great many people with sufficient means who have taken up civilian aviation, but there are many who would like to do it and to help the country, but who do not possess the necessary funds.

I suggest that every candidate should be taken for his three trial trips. If by the end of the third he has shown himself to be physically and mentally proficient and he is prepared to come into the scheme, he must take his "A" Licence when and where he chooses, with an undertaking that if he comes into the final scheme after having taken his "A," he will be refunded the amount he has thus spent up to £50. If he is any good, he will have taken his "A" somewhere between £35 and £50, and the difference will be given to him later, as will be explained.

He must at the same time enter into an agreement to fly at his own expense, where and when he likes, for a minimum of 25 hours per year for three years after taking his "A" Licence, and the 25 hours must be flown in each year, such periods not to be lumped together in any one or two years. On receipt of his Log-Book and paid receipts, £25 per year to be refunded to him for the first two years. Over and above this, the amount between that paid to him for his "A" Licence and £50 also to be paid to him as bonus in the first year towards

his 25 hours flying. If he does not fulfil his contract on his 25 hours, etc., he should be under an obligation under the contract to repay all those sums which have been paid out to him, subject to reasonable questions such as illness, his having to take up a position outside the Kingdom or generally such matters as to the Committee or Directors may appear to be outside his reasonable control.

In order to select the pilots, it is absolutely necessary to have some machines to fly the candidates and also to test them. These machines must be up-to-date and fast. It is no good, in order to try and examine a man, to take him slowly over one aerodrome and to see whether he is likely to make one of a picked group. The cost of these machines will be high, and I do not see, at present prices, that it would be worth while putting the cost at less than £2,000 for two machines, because I think that two are really necessary. For the three years programme, I estimate the *maintenance* of those machines at £2,000. The pilotage would cost a considerable amount if paid for, but this will be given free by those interested in the cause of air-mindedness and by people who, it is thought, are better able to gauge the worth of a candidate for this scheme than an ordinary paid pilot. Further, these machines could be used and most effectively used, after the year and a half that the scheme had been working; after that time many pilots would have done 42 hours solo on their school machines; they would then be able to take their agreed flying hours on the modern fast machines and to complete their hours of flying in them, thereby becoming more efficient as pilots.

Should this scheme be taken up it is probably very much better that it should be done under the ægis of a private company which would only require an address and a secretary to deal with correspondence, books, and the checking of logs, and also an auditor to render an account to those who have financed it. Under this idea, the only overhead expenses apart from the formation of the Company, would be the rent of a room, the salaries of the secretary and clerical staff and the auditors. Neither the Directors nor the pilots of the demonstration machines would ask for remuneration.

Fool's Song

I have looked into a darkened pool
And seen how close loveliness is to death.
I turn to bitterness . . . eternal fool
Seeking a lost reflection underneath
The tangled weeds. I have seen hope grow mute
And lose its ardour, being unfulfilled,
Have heard the voice of circumstance refute
The wisdom of the dreams my folly willed.
I have looked into a clouded pool
For stars, and seen within the depths—a fool.

KATHLEEN MERRICK.

Birds of Death

By J. Wentworth Day

NOT very long ago a crow cawed each morning for a week in a certain street of small villas in Southend. Three people died in that street in the week. Whereupon the smug and excellent people of Southend's villadom forgot their modern smugness and reverted to pure paganism. They declared that the crow was a bird of death. Someone, from some backwater of inherited superstition, remembered that if you bow thrice to a crow, it will fly away.

So they got an aged man to bob to the crow. And this you may be sure, scared the bird back to whatever lonely marsh holt was his home. At any rate the death rate stood still.

I like that story, particularly with Southend as its background. It fits all the tales that have come down from the days when the whole sable brotherhood was pure white and blameless until a raven told Apollo that Coronis, the Thessalian nymph whom he loved, had been faithless. Whereupon the god shot the nymph and

"Blacked the raven o'er

And bade him prate in his white plumes
no more."

That is a true tale of the old Greeks and a tale I love. It is the forerunner of all those tales that men have hung about birds' necks and handed down the dim centuries, believed in, feared, dreaded—and more than once, proved true.

They are ghoulish tales, these legends of the black brotherhood of *Corvus*. Zaminchus said that crows were devils in bird shape, which was why they knew so much more than men. Odin took them for his heralds and councillors, but they blabbed all the secrets of Valhalla, and were thrown out. Indra was so wroth with their scandalmongering that he hurled them down through all the hundred stages of his heaven—and when Mahomed hid in the rocks of Thaur the crows talked so freely that he was only saved because the dove built her nest and the spider spun his web to hide it.

So you see that crows are worthy of no honour, fit to carry no secret, outcast of all honourable birds, mere blabbers, gossips, and scandal-bearers; horrid scavengers of battlefields, who flock

... on eager wings
To tear the flesh of captains
And peck the eyes of kings.

They are a pack of ghouls, a band of northern brigands; a godless crew of cut-throats; these "preditious crows," as Quarles calls them. Harken to their battle song:—

Famine and plague bring joy to me,
For I love the harvest they yield.
And the fairest sight I ever see
Is the crimson battlefield.
When the world shall be spread with tombless
dead

And darkness shroud all below,
What triumph and glee to the last shall be
For the sateless carrion crow.

I know of only one good deed to the credit of the crow, though some ornithological historians claim even that for the raven, who is a noble fellow by comparison.

That is the tale of St. Vincent, the patron saint of Portugal, whom the Proconsul Dacian tried to put to death by torture. St. Vincent survived miraculously, and Dacian thereupon ordered him to be thrown to the beasts, but a raven drove away a wolf and guarded the saint.

Dacian then took the holy man out to sea, put a millstone about his neck and threw him overboard. When the boat reached shore the body of the saint already lay on the beach. The murderers fled in terror.

Many years later, in the eighth century, the body was taken by ship from Valencia, where it had lain, and was driven by storm through the Straits of Hercules to Cape St. Vincent, where it remained guarded by crows until 1147, when Alonzo the First removed the relics to Lisbon, whither they went by ship, with a crow at the bows as pilot and a crow at the stern as helmsman.

The crows remained at Lisbon to guard the bones of the Saint, which lie there to-day, but the birds multiplied so rapidly that rents were assigned by the Chapter for their upkeep. The relics, the crows, and the rents are there still.

The rook is the only one of all that black clan of whom I can tell you comfortable tales. But he dwells about the houses of men; he is a homely fustian fellow; a forager of the fields; a companion of old farms and sleepy manors; English of the English. His legends are loveable things, such as the tale of how this or that rookery cawed and nested through the centuries about some valley-guarded grange until the hour when the old line was ended, the last squire dead, and a new name writ on the manor rolls. Then the rooks left.

I know such a tale of a lady who lived in a thatched manor house in a village of the Fens. The rooks dwelt about her house. They swung high in the morning sky at her coming out, and cawed drowsily at her window when the moon was young about the rim of the world.

One day the lady of that small and ancient manor fell ill and the shadow of death was upon her.

Then the rooks rose high in the night sky with a great and wheeling clamour under the red September moon, and cawed in a strange, wild symphony far into the night. That night the lady died, and the rooks dwelt about that house no more. This I know, for I live in that house.

(To be Continued)

Letters from a Candid Critic — III

To Mr. Baldwin

DEAR MR. BALDWIN,

Cast your mind, for a moment, back to the announcement of the Cabinet personnel after the last General Election. Put yourself in the place of any honest, plain thinking Conservative voter.

Imagine his consternation when not only having witnessed in fifty instances the incredible spectacle of Conservatives standing down to make way for Liberal and Socialist candidates, aided by Conservative funds and organisation, he suffered added insult by being told that the man chosen to lead the Conservative Government was the arch-wrecker himself, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald. A "National" Government captained by an International Socialist. Could any paradox be more criminal?

We are told by those who whisper behind political curtains, that Mr. Macdonald, the man who encouraged the General Strike, who preached sedition in the War, had been chosen for this position because you, Mr. Baldwin, frightened by your first feeble essay at Protection, had decided that it would be easier, if less courageous, to give the country Protection from behind the stalking-horse of a Socialist premier. Another version is that since Mr. Macdonald had got the country into a mess, he could now pull it out again.

What is the truth? This pseudo-statesman, with the ragged moustaches, the befuddled periods and the pompous rhetoric, branded by his own party as a traitor, derided by the Liberals, distrusted by the Tories, disliked by all true Englishmen, was a cleverer strategist than the pig-breeder from Worcestershire.

He manœvered himself into the key position of the very Government which had overthrown his own traitorous administration. And, being a master tactician, bred on all the shoddy tricks of the agitator, the street-corner orator, the trades union Tammany Hall, he outwitted the poor but honest brains(?) of the Conservative party leader.

Look at the fabric of Government with which he has surrounded himself—that arch-Free Trader, Mr. Runciman is President of the Board of Trade in a Government pledged to Protection. That arch-vulgarian, Mr. J. H. Thomas, who has done more to insult the Dominions than any man alive or dead, is Secretary for the Dominions. Here he can mouth his inanities at the expense of every visiting Premier of every young and growing Dominion which wishes to regard this country as a Mother Country of dignity, courtesy and fair dealing. What a schoolmaster to bring up the young.

And so we might go on. Every Department almost is riddled through and through with men who preach the doctrine which conspired to ruin this country in 1929—1931.

The results we know. Ottawa gave protection with one hand. Mr. Ramsay Macdonald and Mr. Runciman took it away with the other. India is on the brink of betrayal. Our treaty with Japan,

our most faithful ally in the East, a diplomatic weapon of the utmost value, was thrown overboard. Our Air Force is fifth, if not sixth in world power. Our Navy, for the first time in modern history, is second-class—think of it, less than the naval strength of the United States.

Meanwhile, our treaty with Japan successfully broken, the navies of that country and America growl at each other across the Pacific, their eyes on Australia. And Australia itself is flooded with Japanese goods. Silk shirts at a shilling each. Tennis shoes at a penny a pair, beer at fivepence and sixpence a bottle—all produced by Japanese workmen who live on three shillings a week, a handful of rice and a hint of the Mikado. How can we compete? For how much longer can Australia regard us as her Mother and her defender?

Our Army has shrunk to microscopic dimensions.

Our Empire airways last year flew 1,766,000 miles over less than 12,000 miles of air routes, as compared with 5,500,000 miles flown by French aircraft over 22,845 miles. American Civil Aircraft flew more than 50,000,000 miles over nearly 50,000 miles of route. Is this "national" government? Is this putting the interests of the Empire before all else?

In two years time or so these matters will come up for judgment. The Conservative party will be in the dock. There will be cross-examinations in all the constituencies. I would not be in the shoes of any "national" Member of Parliament for a life annuity. How will these miserable back-benchers, half of them without any previous experience of government, more than half of them subsidised by the Central Office, whipped to heel by the Whips—how will these poor puppets excuse themselves?

Most of them will go down like corn before the scythe. They will be swept back into that middle-class obscurity from whence they came. And the prestige of the Conservative party will pay for the bankruptcy of their promises.

Meanwhile, are we to tolerate the spectacle of you, Mr. Baldwin, playing the part of the pink-Liberal puppet to Mr. Macdonald, that self-confessed Socialist, each holding the other's hands in a clammy grip of mutual distrust and political expediency? You two political leaning towers of Pisa are propping each other up at the Empire's expense.

Regard with a detached ear your own colossal impertinence over India; "If I am wrong in my judgment, I will hold myself personally responsible." I—Stanley Baldwin!

Since when has a demi-semi Premier of England dared to put forward the alternative of asking the country to choose between his own passing prestige or the surrender of an Empire?

As Lady Houston has so rightly said, what man has the right to pit personalities against principles?

And when the judgment comes, what will be the slogan of the next battle? I asked this of a man high in the councils of the Conservative party,

there is indeed none higher except yourself. He answered:—"We shall fight the next General Election on Socialism—versus—Anti-Socialism."

Since when has an anti won anything? Was this Empire built on defence or offence? Did Clive temporise? Did Warren Hastings wobble at the knees? Did Nelson clap his telescope to his blind eye when the enemy loomed on the horizon? Did Palmerston truckle to half-educated native agitators? Did Elizabeth allow rebels to gnaw at her flanks in Ireland? Did Cromwell pay heed to "The Voice of the people" when decadence and

decay had thrown open the very mouth of the Thames to enemy guns and alien ships?

Translate those old problems of history into the terms of present-day world affairs and you, our "Leader," cannot deny that the Conservative party, led from the back, captained by men Conservative in name alone, must answer eventually the question that in two years will confront them—Empire or Eclipse?

On the reply to that question, you will stand or fall.

YOUR CANDID CRITIC.

The Feel of a Rod

By Guy C. Pollock

LADIES and gentlemen, I hold in my hand this piece, these two or three pieces, of wood or cane. They are joined together with little gadgets of steel or, if you please, fastened with strappings; they are bound at regular intervals in the manner of bat or racquet and as wrist or ankle may be bound for the comfort of support.

But I should not be candid if I told you there was no deception. This weapon, instrument, or toy is full of deception and indeed the quickness of the hand—so the hand be adequately cunning—deceives the eye. Yet perhaps not so much the quickness as the delicacy and the skill.

What is more, this conjuror's wand has magic in it. Supernatural powers have been built into it. So that it becomes a flying carpet, the waters of Lethe, a cap of invisibility and an Elixir of Life as you shall direct; it has, too, the power to transmute base metal into gold. Could all the Magicians, all the Alchemists, all the King's horses do or pretend to more?

So now you know that it is a fishing rod. I put aside the memories of golden heads and golden hours, of youth and joy and the true zest of living which it holds. For these are personal to me and to this one dear rod. Give me a rod, any rod over the counter, straight from the artist's hands or even from the factory and all the other properties are there.

It may be supposed that I am standing here in London. Absurd! Directly I take the rod in my hand I am away, by flying carpet, on the banks of the Afontwrchan, with H. T. S. fishing the more comfortable stretch below me; I am tying on a new March Brown before wading in at the tail of the run to cast over the monster trout—possibly more than half a pound—which broke H. T. S. two days ago. Or I am sitting in a boat with the Other on Lake Vyrnwy, beginning the drift where we had our record day four years ago and Ap. Jones is saying "The lady always brings us luck—and, name of goodness, she can throw a fly." Or I am on the Walkham, where first I hurled a fly when the world was my oyster and the sky of life knew not a cloud.

The flying carpet, the waters of Lethe, and the

pavements of London change to the hills and valleys of Wales, the moss-grown boulders of a Dartmoor stream!

But its noblest quality is normal enough. That is the feel of a rod. To savour that you must go further than Pall Mall or St. James's Street, further even than the opulent South. You must go West or North so that you have the pebbles or the boulders under your slowly moving feet and the strong water pushing against or around your legs.

Preferably around your legs, for the complete ecstasy of the feel of a rod means a salmon pool and wading very slowly downstream. Then you shall know what it means to wield a rod, when you recover cleanly from the water (not dragging out a deep sunk fly with the plop of an out-drawn cork), when the line is swept with a strong rhythmic force round your shoulder, is felt for one instant extended in the air, and is swept forward again with the same strong rhythmic force to put the fly right across the pool in the run under the opposing trees (which race past your eyes whenever these are lifted from the running river), where a fish may pull at any moment.

But never mind the fish. They are, after all, the excuse for the sensation of the rod, as gun or golf ball may be the excuse for tasting your legs. It is the sensation of the rod which brings the ecstasy, half savage and half sensuous. The sense of power, the fierce joy of force properly applied, the enchanting beauty of rhythm, the illusion of achievement and of mastery—these compound the ecstasy. So that, long after your loins are aching ("Hiking?" he asked the walker. "Yes, in every limb") and your arms are numb, the feel of the rod sustains you and will be with you even unto the end.

Even unto the end. This ecstasy is not sated by fulfilment, withered by disillusion, or eaten by the years. It may be that the hand shall lose its cunning, the eye its quickness; that stricken legs may no more stumble over boulders, or arms and loins turn aptly for the rhythm of the cast. But the soul of the fisherman shall never lose its ardour so long as it inhabits the body of an angler.

And afterwards? The soul goes marching on.

Financing The White Paper

Sir Samuel Hoare's Belated Discovery

By Hamish Blair

ONE is reluctant to add to the buzz of comment which must have arisen at home over the belated discovery of Sir Malcolm Hailey and Sir Samuel Hoare, that Federation is impossible at the present time, owing to the fact that India is too poor to afford the luxury. But it may be of interest to advert to some of the comments which have been occasioned in this country.

One of these is the inevitable one that the sponsors of the White Paper are getting cold feet as they penetrate more deeply into the jungle of difficulties and dangers which has sprung up around them. Instead, however, of owning up to it, they are now attempting to blame the *impasse* upon the unfortunate world crisis.

The sapient Mr. Baldwin has told us that if we disappoint the aspirations of "intellectual and political India" we are going to have a bad time. If by any chance he should have blundered into telling the truth in this matter, it might be pointed out that the very worst method of disappointing those aspirations is to do so in such a manner as to cast doubts upon British honesty.

If the British wet nurses of the White Paper policy are growing doubtful as to its capacity to survive, they would have been better advised to say so frankly, and to brave the stage thunder of indignation which would have duly broken forth in India. But to lead the politicians on to count on a new heaven and a new earth, in which Gandhi would understudy the Almighty and they would be angels and archangels at ten thousand a month each—and then to tell them in cold blood that the prospectus has been faked, and that no allotment will take place, is to give them, what they have wanted for years, a real grievance. Surely honest Stanley can't have been consulted about this.

As to the calculations of Messrs. Hailey and Hoare themselves, the observer in India receives them with a vast cynicism which is born of experience. Estimates of expenditure are always, or nearly always optimistic in most countries. In India they are without exception fantastic. In placing the cost of Federation at 50 crores, as against Sir Malcolm Hailey's estimate of ten, the *Morning Post* is amply justified by precedent.

Twenty years ago, for example, Lord Hardinge of Penshurst—the first of a line of "dud" Viceroyes which began with him, and ended (let us hope) with Lord Irwin—persuaded a Liberal Government to order the capital to be transferred from Calcutta to Delhi. The cost of building a new capital, he airily assured them, would not be more than four crores of rupees. It has in point of fact already cost exactly five times as much, and the complete bill has not yet been sent in.

Another wild miscalculation cropped up recently in the report of the Franchise Committee, presided over by Lord Lothian. Lord Lothian and his friends assured us that the total cost of working the new franchise all over India would be about a crore of rupees. A caustic comment on this estimate is furnished by the Indian correspondent of a Madras paper, who calculates that last year the cost of the District Board elections alone in the single Presidency of Madras came to 50 lakhs of rupees, or half the sum allotted by the Lothian Committee to the whole of India!

These instances might easily be multiplied. If we double and treble Sir Malcolm Hailey's estimate of the cost of establishing the new system we shall probably have reason, like Clive, to stand amazed at our own moderation. The recurring cost is a detail which does not seem to have been considered—except by the *Morning Post*, which puts it at twelve crores per annum—but certain provinces, notably Bihar and Orissa, are already wondering whether they can run to it. Sir Samuel Hoare's pronouncement is held in some quarters to presage new taxation, but here he parts company with his friends in this country.

"Industry, agriculture and trade are all suffering from excessive taxation, direct and indirect," says the *Madras Mail*, a stout supporter of the White Paper, which adds that "the burden has crippled the purchasing power of the people and is handicapping trade and industry in every market." And when Sir Samuel Hoare bleats about "going on hoping that there will be a turn for the better," the same doughty backer reminds him that "the problem has to be faced, and to engage in further enquiry some months or years hence will not make its solution easier."

SHORT STORY

O Give Me One !

By Anne Armstrong

*Pigeons on the corn stoops in the sun,
Pigeons shying to avoid a gun,
Pigeons cooing happily for fun,
O give me one !*

H.M.L.

HE didn't enjoy killing things. He was sorry for the fox, and never believed the stories he heard about the fox really enjoying the chase. He didn't believe the fox enjoyed it at all.

He had a friend who was a gamekeeper down in Hampshire, and he used to be a little horrified when he was shown small pheasant chicks, and he wondered what the pheasants thought when the hand that had been feeding them suddenly started to shoot them down. He realised that he wasn't a sporting man—very few poor people were—but he wasn't at all sure that the men who shot down

hand-reared pheasants were sportsmen either.

He didn't enjoy killing things, but he'd been out of work for weeks and weeks and there didn't seem very much likelihood of being in work for weeks and weeks, and he didn't imagine that the pigeons would feel it very much.

"You'll be shown what to do," his friend on the council had told him; "you get them in nets and you wring their necks there and then. There won't be anybody about at that hour in the morning, and it's quite good money."

Quite good money. And he hadn't had quite good money for longer than he liked to remember. And the pigeons wouldn't feel it very much.

Personally, he didn't think there were too many pigeons about. He liked to see them fluttering about in the parks and the squares, and a hundred or two more or less didn't seem to matter very much.

But the council had made up their minds. There were too many pigeons in London, and they were ready to pay quite good money to have them removed.

He got out of the train and sadly made his way to the little café where the half-dozen men were meeting. His companions had all collected, and they looked an odd assortment. He didn't think they all looked like pigeon-killers, but he wasn't at all sure what a pigeon-killer really looked like. He sat down and ordered himself a cup of coffee.

"When do we move on?" he asked.

"The nets is baited—and the b—— birds'll be in them right now," a large red-nosed man informed him.

He made a mental note not to talk to the red-nosed man again.

They were a very odd assortment. Two looked like the better class artisan, and one or two as though many years had been spent leaning over a ledger. He thought of his gamekeeper friend in Hampshire, with his gamekeeper's coat and the gun under his arm—he wondered how this funny collection of men would get on if they were given a gun and told to get the pigeons in the wood. He had once watched the gamekeeper's young gentlemen shooting at pigeons, and it looked an extremely difficult thing. With a cold feeling down his spine, he remembered how he had hated seeing the falling birds and, when he had seen the gamekeeper make sure that one of them was dead, how physically sick he had felt.

The feeling had made him ashamed. He didn't think that many men would admit that a dying pigeon had made them feel sick. He rather hoped he wouldn't disgrace himself this morning. It would be rather serious if he turned tail at the last moment—especially in front of the red-nosed man.

"I shall ring their necks," he bravely told himself, "and I shan't mind a tuppenny damn."

They moved on very soon, and he was careful not to walk anywhere near the red-nosed man. He thought that if he saw anything particularly brutal

he would probably make for the man, and there would be a scene and he wouldn't get his money.

The nets were full. It only took a few minutes to let them down, draw them up, pull the strings at the corners tight and there was a netful. This particular party had a netful of pigeons to each man. They had been told to cause as little suffering as possible; they had been told exactly how to ring each pigeon's neck, but he felt sick very quickly. They were so soft, so warm, and the fluttering breath was almost more than he could bear.

When it was all over he was white and shaking, and little rivers of sweat were running down into his shirt. The others had finished their nets long and away before he had, and in exasperation the others had come across and finished off his for him.

"You're a lot of perishing good, aren't you?" said his red-nosed friend. "Anybody might think as how you was afeared of the perishers."

But it was all over, and he was going home in the workmen's train. He couldn't stop thinking of the pigeons, of the little white feathers at the back of the neck and the downy soft feathers on the breast, and the way the legs had instantly stiffened as though in agony. And he couldn't forget the contempt of the other fellows. They had thrown names at him like "Sissy" and—and—worse, and he knew that there was no more money to be made, at any rate by him, by pigeon killing. He was a weak and stupid coward, and he couldn't make up his mind if he was most ashamed because he had killed all those harmless birds or because he hadn't been able to kill them like the other men.

He got home, and he tried to pretend to his wife that everything had gone off well.

"I did it," he boasted.

She looked at him, and there was an understanding smile on her face. "I've got some nice hot coffee for you," she told him, "and you can just go to bed and sleep till the afternoon."

He followed her into the small sitting-room that needed a new pay-by-the-way instalment. Well, it would be paid for—the pigeons had seen to that for him.

"And before you go up," she said, "there's something you've got to do. You're ever so neat and handy with your fingers."

She dragged a sugar-box out into the middle of the room and very gently lifted the pigeon out of the straw. "The poor thing flew in just after you'd gone—and it's gone an' broke its leg."

He stared at her, saying nothing. "Here's the match stick, and here's some wool, and just you sit down and make it a splint"—and she smiled at him—"the same as that chap in Hampshire showed you. Then we'll keep it till it's strong and can fly away again."

And as he bent over the grey and white pigeon and deftly and surely manipulated the home-made splint, he thought how nice it would be to hear it cooing in the trees in the street outside. Perhaps it might coo in the house?

They had cooed in the nets.

SERIAL

The Surrender of an Empire

By Mrs. Nesta H. Webster

Mrs. Webster's remarkable work issued by the Boswell Printing & Publishing Co., went into a second edition in 1931 and is now being republished in a popular edition at 7s. 6d. It was and is, in our opinion, a book of fundamental importance for all who would understand the politics of the modern world. We therefore hold it a privilege to reprint week by week extracts from this illuminating history.

IN July Rakovsky arrived in London to take the place of Krassin as Soviet representative. It may be of interest here to follow the past career of this personage.

Kristo Stancioff Rakovsky was born in 1873 at Kotel in Bulgaria. According to one account his parents were Bulgarian, though Turkish subjects, according to another his father was a gipsy and his mother Turkish, whilst yet a third described him as a Roumanian Jew, his family having settled in the Dobrudja eight years after his birth. His education had been begun at Gabrovo in Bulgaria, afterwards he attended several universities, including Geneva, where he became associated with the famous Revolutionary Socialist Vera Sassulitch, and in 1900 he went to Russia and engaged in Marxist propaganda.

On the outbreak of war, Rakovsky became a German agent under the direction of Parvus, alias Helphand, who employed him to carry on pro-German agitation in Roumania and Italy, and financed his defeatist paper published in Roumanian, *Lupta* (The Struggle). In this work he was associated with the Swiss professor Robert Grimm and the Russian Jewess Angelica Balabanova. Rakovsky was finally arrested in Roumania as a German spy and kept under restraint until 1917, when he was delivered by Russian deserters and then returned to Russia. In the following year, as President of the Ukraine Soviet Republic, he carried out a reign of terror at Odessa directed particularly against pro-Ally Roumanians under which a series of murders and appalling atrocities took place. In 1919 he founded a school for Communist propaganda at Kharkoff, where he worked in touch with the French Communist, Jacques Sadoul, representative of the Third International for propaganda in the Balkans. Rakovsky himself was a member of the Executive Committee of the Russian Communist Party.

Such was the man who, under a Conservative Government, was allowed to come to London as representative of Russia. Whether his *dossier*, which must have been in the possession of the Foreign Office, was ever brought to the notice of Lord Curzon must remain a mystery; at any rate in the light which this and the foregoing correspondence provide, the further exploits of the Soviet Delegation to this country, which culminated in the affair of the Arcos Raid in 1927, appear in no way surprising.

Lord Curzon afterwards spoke of Soviet activities as having been "in full blast" when he left the Foreign Office on the accession of the Labour Government in 1924. Why, then, did he admit Rakovsky to the country? Why did he not tear

up the Anglo-Russian Trade Agreement which, on his own showing, had been so flagrantly violated? Why did the Conservative Government not now break up the Soviet organisation in Moorgate Street, as they found themselves obliged to do four years later?

The *Morning Post* once observed, before the fall of the Coalition Government, when commenting on the Labour Party's strange subservience to the Soviet Government, that the Bolsheviks appeared to have some mysterious power, "a sort of dreadful fascination, like the snake over the bird," and it went on to ask: "Is the Prime Minister [Mr. Lloyd George] also under this dreadful fascination?"¹

Yet it appeared that Conservative statesmen likewise were not proof against the spell of the monster, and when it came to taking resolute action against it were paralysed, petrified into immobility, "as before the Gorgon's head."

It is now time to turn to the question of the Entente with France, which Mr. Lloyd George had done so much to weaken and which the electorate that had placed the Conservative Government in power hoped to see restored to its former vigour. The great problem of the moment was that of German reparations, and we must take up the thread of narrative relating to the discussions that took place at the point where it was dropped in Chapter II after the Genoa Conference of April 1922.

The next incident was the undertaking embodied in what is known as the "Balfour Note," issued on August 1, 1922, by which Great Britain agreed to accept no more in respect of reparations from Germany and war debts than the amount of her debt to the United States, namely, £850,000,000, although the sum owing to her amounted to £3,400,000,000.

On August 7 a Conference of Allied Prime Ministers took place in London to discuss Germany's request for a moratorium for 1922. This was refused, but it was decided that Germany should be allowed to issue Treasury Bonds of six months' currency for the balance of payment due, which amounted to much the same.

At this moment Mr. Lloyd George fell from power. But although her principal advocate had now been replaced by Mr. Bonar Law as Prime Minister, Germany, emboldened by the concessions recently made to her, and counting on the influence at work behind the scenes to support her cause, proceeded on November 13, 1922, to deliver a Note to the Reparations Commission, in

¹ *Morning Post*, March 23, 1922.

SERIAL

which she calmly requested to be relieved for three or four years from all payments in kind or cash, and proposed a conference of international financiers to consider granting her a bank credit. Affixed to the Note was a report drawn up by a number of international financial "experts," expressing approval. Amongst these was Mr. J. M. Keynes, whose book, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, had been described by Lord Balfour in the House of Commons as "an apology for Germany."¹

The General Election which took place later, after which the Conservative Government came into office, delayed negotiations for a few weeks, but filled the French meanwhile with hope that the question of reparations would now be firmly dealt with. Hitherto, the *Temps* observed, the Germans had known that England would prevent France being paid by Germany. Confidence was expressed in Paris that the advent to power of the Conservative Government under Mr. Bonar Law, whose courtesy and friendliness were applauded on all sides, would inaugurate a better order of things.

Unfortunately these hopes were not realised. Further conferences in London on December 9 and in Paris on January 11 led to no conclusions, and although the Reparations Commission in Paris declared Germany to be in default with regard to deliveries of timber to France, Great Britain proceeded to advocate a four years' moratorium. To this France replied that she was prepared to consent to a two years' moratorium if Britain agreed to cancel France's debt to her.

This was surely logical. How could France be expected to pay her debt to Britain if she was not to be paid by Germany? The outcry against French rapacity which arose in certain quarters at this crisis was based on an imperfect grasp of the situation. Ever since the War the British Government under Mr. Lloyd George had failed to overcome Germany's resistance to the payment of her just dues or to procure any guarantee of security to France. And now that Mr. Lloyd George was gone, the same policy was apparently to be continued. France therefore decided to take the law into her own hands and, in company with the Belgians, to carry out the plan agreed to by the Allies at the London Conference of April 30, 1921.

Accordingly on January 11, 1923, the French and Belgian troops entered the valley of the Ruhr.

A storm of controversy has raged around the legality of this step; wild stories were current at the time with regard to French plans of aggression and French "Imperialism." Yet so impartial a critic as Mr. R. B. Mowat wrote on this question: "France in occupying the Ruhr was acting within her rights according to the literal interpretation of the Treaty of Versailles," and further: "The occupation of the Ruhr and the steady wearing down of the German passive resistance produced the 'will to pay' without which the Dawes Scheme would have been so much waste paper."²

But for the sympathy shown to Germany by her friends abroad, particularly in this country, the

Ruhr episode would undoubtedly have been crowned with greater success. It was the knowledge that she could find support in these circles which encouraged Germany to embark on her policy of passive resistance, which prolonged operations and led to so much misery for her own people. Moscow also proclaimed its solidarity with "the workers of the Ruhr" and, whilst appealing to Great Britain through the Quakers for £75,000 in order to relieve the famine in Russia, was sending thousands of tons of wheat to the Ruhr so as to fortify resistance to the French.

The British Labour Party in combination with the T.U.C. was, of course, particularly vociferous in demanding the withdrawal of the French troops, and hastened to pass a resolution expressing sympathy with the population of the Ruhr. Meanwhile Mr. Lloyd George surpassed himself in venom towards the nation for which he had once professed friendship. In an article on the Ruhr question which he contributed to the Hearst Press he wrote:

France has once more jumped on the prostrate form of Germany and the sabots have come down with a thud that will sicken the hearts of multitudes on both sides of the Atlantic, whose friendship with France stood the losses and griefs of a four years' war. There is no doubt some joy for the unsportsmanlike mind in kicking a helpless giant who once maltreated you, and who, but for the assistance of powerful neighbours, would have done so a second time.

This, after Mr. Lloyd George himself had agreed with Monsieur Briand less than two years earlier that the Ruhr must be occupied if Germany did not comply with the conditions imposed by the Allies! Germany had evaded all her obligations, and now, just after this article appeared, the Reparations Commission declared her to be in general default.

The *Evening Standard*, answering Mr. Lloyd George's tirade, observed:

The dishonesty of Germany, the wriggings and evasions of the last four years, the insolence of her present bearing, her undisguised satisfaction at the rift in the Entente make an appeal to the feelings on her behalf ridiculous. She is not a "blind giant" kicked while helpless, but a very cunning and far-seeing swindler, with, unfortunately, too many cards up her sleeve.

At the very moment that Germany was pleading inability to pay, her industries were booming, new factories were springing up not only in the Ruhr, but all over the country, her new merchant fleet had been constructed since the War and miles of railway had been added by Krupps to their works. Taxation stood at £1 a head, instead of £20 as in England. It is true that the "intellectuals" and professional classes had been reduced to poverty—sacrificed to the interests of the big industrialists—but the manual workers were well paid, their wages rising in proportion with the fall of the mark. This inflation of currency had been deliberately brought about by the business men and financiers, who at the same time deposited huge sums of gold abroad.

¹ Hansard, vol. cxxv, col. 298. Date of February 12, 1920.

² *European Diplomacy*, 1914-25, pp. 244, 245.

Previous extracts were published on May 20, 27, June 3, 10, 17, 24, July, 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, and August 5, 12 and 19.

Horatio Bottomley

By W. Echalaz

THE Bottomley legend dies hard. There are still people who say that, if he had gone straight, he could have done anything. Others cling to a belief that he was a true patriot who was hardly used. Some even of his victims fancy that if he had only been let alone, his financial genius would have made the fortunes of all who had trusted him.

It is hard to find the smallest confirmation of any of these ideas from an impartial study of Bottomley's career. He was essentially a crook. His guiding principle was to steal as much of other people's money as he could and spend it. One looks in vain throughout his life for any original idea, any ambition that was not sordid. His patriotism was claptrap, and he is said to have made £25,000 out of his patriotic lectures. Even in his swindling there was nothing new or particularly brilliant.

The law is admittedly "a ass—a idiot," but its futility in the case of Bottomley was unspeakable. Time and again he escaped when his guilt was palpable, and his main excuse was an Olympian contempt for books and accounts. Regularly he was sent back with a sheet more or less clean to swindle a few more victims. It is true that the majority of his earlier victims had small claim on sympathy. That greed which makes people hope for an impossible percentage on their money commands little respect, whether it ruins a country parson or a maiden lady. Neither the one nor the other can plead ignorance as an excuse for avarice.

The John Bull Mask

It is possible that Bottomley might have risen to high estate, if he had kept within the law. Every person who is not genuine—and how many are true to themselves?—has a pose to mask what he is, which suits his particular temperament. Bottomley's pose was one which appealed to the English mind. He was the bluff, downright, unimaginative John Bull, sentimental to hypocrisy, and a player of the game for the game's sake, always provided that the game paid.

If he had had enough intelligence to dodge the law, he might quite well have attained eminence as a politician. It is exceedingly lucky that he was too short-sighted for anything of the kind. For Bottomley possessed something of the Tudor secret: he did understand the weaknesses of the English people; and it would have been disastrous if he had risen to power, when, as his life proves, he had not a single constructive notion, nothing approaching an ideal or principle of life. Astute men of a similar type do attain to office and they are the curse of democracy. Indeed, not a few of those associated with him in his early life were more successful, because their caution checked their ambition, though courage was never one of Bottomley's virtues.

Yet it is obvious that he was an exceptional man. He started from nothing and played so gaily with other people's millions that, according to his own statement, he could not live on less than £1,000 a week. Between 1889 and 1921 something like four and a half millions seem to have passed through his hands and disappeared. Some may consider that he did not pay too dearly for his thirty-two years' run with seven years penal servitude. Probably his real punishment came later, when he came out of prison full of confidence that he would be able to begin his life over again. The same old tricks would produce the same effect.

They did not. He had too much to live down, and his final adventure, swindling the men whose heroism he professed to worship, could expect no pardon. No one was touched by his declaration that he had paid. There had always been a hint of whining cowardice in his bluff and it was in vain that he called the gods to witness his repentance. Not even his special gift could get away with it.

What was that special gift which enabled Bottomley to play ducks and drakes with other people's money?

There is a mystery about most of the great scoundrels of history. The Borgia, for instance, scarcely troubled to conceal their villainy; yet whenever occasion arose their enemies, themselves no novices in crime, fell into their hands as blindly and as trustingly as birds caught in a snare. The secret lay in the Borgia charm which quieted the most reasonable suspicions. Cagliostro and Casanova shared this curious talent and many another ruffian.

In September, 1912, we find Mr. F. E. Smith (Lord Birkenhead to be) writing:

In many ways I consider Mr. Horatio Bottomley to be one of the most attractive speakers to whom I have ever listened; he certainly attains to a higher degree of excellence in three quite distinct types of speech than any speaker known to me. His House of Commons style was almost ideal, self-possessed, quiet, irresistibly witty, and distinguished equally by common sense and tolerance. He made for himself a position in the House of Commons, of which nothing but the loss of his seat could deprive him. His absence from the House of Commons has impoverished the public stock of gaiety, of cleverness, of common sense.

First class brains fell under Bottomley's spell just as the lesser acumen of the ordinary folk who sent him their cheques or postal orders. His magnetic attraction has no more moral importance than extreme muscular development. Behind it there was nothing of the smallest value to society or humanity. He might have done much more harm than he did and had an exceedingly good run for his money.

An outline of his career is to be found in a book called "The Rise and Fall of Horatio Bottomley" (Denis Archer, 5s.). It is badly written and printed and full of misprints, but it contains a summary of the chief events in Bottomley's career.

NEW NOVELS

REVIEWED BY ANNE ARMSTRONG

Wonder Hero. By J. B. Priestley. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

Dryad. By Ethel Mannin. Jarrolds. 7s. 6d.

Forthcoming Marriages. By Mary Lutyens. Murray. 7s. 6d.

NOTHING, so they say, is so delicate as the reputation of a woman—that may be so; but the reputation of a writer is hard got and very soon gone. The number of young and inexperienced writers, who think that once they are given a start all will be easy, are legion. They ignore the fact that once a reputation has been achieved the fire has to be stoked, and then stoked again.

Mr. Priestley's own particular fire was so well stacked up that he is still warming himself at the embers. "The Good Companions" and "Angel Pavement" (the latter so much better than the former) saw to that. But "Faraway" was more than a little damping and his latest book "Wonder Hero" (Heinemann, 7s. 6d.) if it does not actually hang as a millstone round his neck, will certainly not enhance his reputation.

Had "Wonder Hero" been written by a beginner or by one with less reputation than Mr. Priestley, it would have been easy to write such things as "shows great promise" or "probably has a great future." As it is, written by the author of "Angel Pavement" it is an amusing extravaganza with here a dig and there a laugh, and were I to write more than that Mr. Priestley could legitimately hold this page up to derision.

The days when institutions and persons were ridiculed and laughed to scorn have gone. Mr. Priestley may imagine that he has made the newspapers of to-day look ridiculous. He hasn't. He sticks pins into them, drops bombs on them from above, but neither pins nor bombs are as deadly as a pen cleverly wielded. Beauty competitions, luxury hotels, cocktail parties and the like—yes, but clumsily, and extravagantly satirised.

A young man, one Charles Habble, is, by a strange concatenation of circumstances accordingly, masquerading as the hero of a fire. A very odd sort of a journalist reporter is on the spot and turns this same Charles Habble into a National Hero—a Wonder Hero. The reporter carries Charles Habble off to town with him, whereupon the *Daily Tribune* presents the Wonder Hero with a cheque for five hundred pounds.

Once our Charles Habble arrives in town the fun starts and the great guns of publicity are turned upon him. He is accommodated free of charge at the luxury hotel of the day—obviously running at a tremendous loss. Charles Habble is bidden to cocktail parties and free clothes and the like are lavished upon him.

Another paper, in friendly rivalry, is running Miss Ida Chatwick, winner of their own beauty competition and of course lion and lioness meet—and of course it turns out that they hail from nearby villages and both are much of a muchness. The lion, of course, falls for the lioness and both their papers, in due course, let them down. And having tried London out and found it wanting,

there is every chance on the last page of their making a match of it and retiring from the scrum.

Not a clever book, not a moving book, not really a very amusing book, for nothing of the savage irony nor the brilliant wit of Swift is here. Swift was a scoundrel and out of the bitterness of what was in his heart he bit and mouthed at other scoundrels; Dickens' humanity forced him to try and put the world right, to redress the wrongs that were, in his opinion, turning the world upside down. Mr. Priestley has neither the Swift punch nor enough apparent Dickensian to make a great satirist.

Not yet, and the fires of Priestley and Priestley will certainly want stoking before very much longer.

Miss Mannin's short stories collected in "Dryad" (Jarrolds, 7s. 6d.) are stories that require dipping into—you must not read straight through them. Miss Mannin has a grudge against so many things and so many people, and she is so ably equipped for making her point that the world would be dreary indeed if you over-indulged in "Dryad." She has a curious knack of seeing other people's faults and weaknesses and is bold and brave enough to put down what she sees. But though she sees these things she is large-hearted enough to deplore the faults and to sympathise with those of us who are "odd." They are not by any means great stories but they are told with more than a spice of humanity. And a humanity that is, I think, genuine and not "turned on" especially for book-making.

Delightful, and as far as I know original, is the book that I have just been given by Mary Lutyens. It is published by Murray and costs seven-and-sixpence. Miss Lutyens has taken nine possible engagement notices that might well have appeared in the *Times* of yesterday or to-day and filled the few short lines with romance. Have you never scanned the forthcoming marriages and wondered to yourself where they met and how they met and whether they are very much in love?

Miss Lutyens' book has made me read them more carefully than ever before.

Rolling Stone. By Lowell Thomas. Long. 16s.

In this volume Mr. Lowell Thomas tells the story of Major A. R. Dugmore who has packed into his life as many adventures as any healthy boy could hope for. From the readers point of view Major Dugmore's experiences as a photographer of big game are the most interesting part of the book and they are admirably illustrated with photographs. This book should appeal to any healthy boy and will fill the stay-at-home with regret for a misspent life.

Richard Jefferies. By Reginald Arkell. Rich & Cowan. 7s. 6d.

A pleasant discursive book which will interest all admirers of Jefferies, and should introduce many new readers to one of the closest and shrewdest observers of Nature since Gilbert White. It is good to know that the farmhouse and reservoir near Swindon which form the background of his best books are now public property and unspoilt.

Psychology of the Thriller

By Malcolm Elwin

ASK the average man—one of no literate pretensions, who “doesn’t have time for much reading”—what sort of book he reads on a holiday, and he will say, “Oh, I like a good thriller.” It is eight years since the wave of crook plays flooded West End theatres, since “The Creaking Chair,” “The Ghost Train,” and Edgar Wallace’s “Ringer” and “Terror,” but the craze for the “thriller” still persists, enjoying a vogue comparable only with the era of Anne Radcliffe at the end of the eighteenth century, with the early Victorian boom following “Oliver Twist” and Ainsworth’s “Rookwood,” and with the successful Wilkie Collins school of the ‘sixties.

The scope of the thriller is wide. To-day the term is taken to embrace the problem story deriving directly from “Sherlock Holmes.” The output by publishers of such stories is enormous; they issue every season in a steady stream, and some publishers, such as Messrs. Hodder, Harrap and Collins, produce a special series of cheap editions which adorn every railway bookstall in the country. Leading statesmen are said to read them for recreation, and for the same reason they supply the reading of the average professional and business man. They offer simultaneously a mental exercise and anodyne, fulfilling the same function as acrostic and cross-word puzzles.

Poe, with his “Murders in the Rue Morgue,” was the originator of the *genre*, but it was first popularised by Conan Doyle with the creation of Sherlock Holmes. The problems may be worked inversely or directly, but all preserve the Holmes pattern. Lawyers should write good detective stories, since the composition of a plot requires the covering of simplicity with a cloak of complexity. Here is the usual recipe:

Begin dramatically with a crime, preferably a death in sensational circumstances. Add as many complications as possible, obscuring the motives and stressing the personal peculiarities of each character. Keep the pot boiling to the final *dénouement*; then crash down the curtain with the utmost *éclat*.

One of the finest examples of this formula is Mr. A. E. W. Mason’s “House of the Arrow,” which ends in the obvious but seemingly least likely solution. A murder believed even by the police to be a natural death is attended by a clumsy attempt to blackmail the deceased’s heiress. The attempt is exposed and sympathy enlisted for the apparent heroine of the novel, but after suspicion has rested first on the blackmailer, then on the heroine’s companion, a second murder has been committed and another attempted, the blackmailer’s wild accusation proves to have been surprisingly founded on fact. The problem reader here has a square deal, as he does in such excellent stories as Mr. E. C. Bentley’s “Trent’s Last Case” and Mr. J. D. Beresford’s “Instrument of Destiny,” but some authors are less scrupulous in beguiling their readers. A good plot in A. K. Green’s “House of the Whispering Pines” is spoiled by

a weak solution in which a minor character, having played small part in the story, confesses to the crime.

The old Sherlock method of working out the story of the crime and then retracing one’s steps, covering up the tracks as one goes, is more simple and less exciting. The reader thus begins at the opposite end to the author, losing himself in the mazes of the mystery until they are complacently unravelled by a *deus ex machina* in the omniscient detective. Since Holmes himself, the best of his kind is Mr. G. K. Chesterton’s Father Brown, who represents one of the few vital personalities in detective fiction.

The problem story, however, is a changeling, the cuckoo in the thriller’s nest. Preoccupying the faculty of logical reason, it makes no play upon the emotions. The thriller must be a hair-raiser, causing the reader late at night to glance furtively over his shoulder; its flavour must be weird or macabre. Elizabethans, like Kyd and Webster, specialised in horrors on the stage, but the earliest novels of thrills were the works of the “supernaturalists,” ranging from “The Mysteries of Udolpho” to “Frankenstein.” Curiously, as the late Sir Walter Raleigh remarked, the story of Horace Walpole’s “Castle of Otranto” is “raised on the structural scheme of the modern detective novel.” To the modern reader, this tale is laughable in its melodramatic gesticulations, thus illustrating the difficulty of playing upon the imagination with conviction and without offending credulity by exaggeration to absurdity.

Satisfactory thrillers are rare. Poe was a master of the macabre, and “The Fall of the House of Usher” is among the weirdest of short stories. In “The Woman in White,” “No Name,” and “Armada,” Wilkie Collins wrote three classic thrillers, each of which surpasses in breathless sensationalism his “Moonstone,” which is often reckoned the progenitor and pattern of the detective story. The problem story, concentrating on realism with its appeal to reason and consequently shunning the bizarre, lends itself reluctantly to thrills, and few writers have succeeded in combining the elements of both.

Stevenson did it in “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,” and among living writers Mr. Mason always endows his crimes with an awesome atmosphere. Bram Stoker had a pretty talent for the gruesome, but the modern master of the macabre is Mr. Hugh Walpole, who has never written a detective story. His “Portrait of a Man with Red Hair” and “Above the Dark Circus” are uncomfortable companions late at night in a silent house, but few readers, after instinctive glances at the door and the curtains, will hurry upstairs to bed before having persevered to the last page. And that is the mark of the true thriller, as well as a good story; it must grip.

An Asiatic Omnibus

The Oriental Caravan. Edited by Sirdar Ikbal Ali Shah. Denis Archer. 8s. 6d. net.

[REVIEWED BY ASHLEY SAMPSON]

PERHAPS the most interesting thing about Sirdar Ikbal Ali Shah's anthology of literature is the fact that, while he has compiled a perfect treasure-house of Eastern literature, he has never allowed the Eastern mind to encroach too far upon the habits of Western thought. This is particularly well exemplified in that part of the book which is given over to philosophical literature. Where we should expect to find Zoroaster and Marcus we can trace the influence of Aristotle and Bergson. This gives the book a double value—for it renders it of as much value to the Eastern who would understand Europe as to the European who would understand the East.

By this I do not for one moment mean that the qualities that we most readily associate with the Eastern pageantry of thought—the nature mysticism of India, the moral genius of Israel, the poetic imagery of China, and the natural contemplativeness of the whole Eastern world—are not present. The book is full of them; but the Sirdar has not endeavoured to achieve the impossible by translating the untranslatable, or imposing upon the Western mind that sense of timelessness which is the peculiar genius of the East. Trance, asceticism and introversion are not here stressed; and, even if the result of this is that large tracts of great literature are missing, at least we have a book that will be read, assimilated and digested by Europeans with great delight and no small profit.

The book is divided into four parts—comprising Religious Literature, Philosophical Literature, Romantic Literature and National Literature. Of the four, Philosophical Literature earns pride of space—including, as it does, a quantity of mystical literature, the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, and Jewish parables. Each of the four sets, however, shade off into one another, as may be gleaned from a verse of *Imagery* by Harindranath Chattopadhyaya.

He is finding for ever his infinite fullness
In blossoming buds and the withering flowers.
He shapes through the heart of the world his Ideal
So white in the midst of the many-hued hours.
He weaves a fine trammel of marvellous colours
Around and about him in utter delight,
Till straight through the darkness his laughter
comes lambent,
Birdlike from a cage in a freedom flight.

This is a poem of romance, religion and philosophy in one as well as a remarkable study of symbolism.

Luckily our own literature has been largely moulded by the Bible; and this opens as beautiful a passage into the literature of Asia as could be desired. I was a little surprised at one or two of the Sirdar's selections from the Old Testament—the calling of Samuel, for instance—out of such a tremendous treasure-house; but it may be that the Eastern mind sees a beauty and a meaning in that story whose importance is only partially apparent to a Western. This is just what renders Sirdar Ikbal Ali Shah's book of such particular importance.

The national boundaries of Asiatic thought seem to be less clearly defined than those of Europe; but of course Asia covers so vast an area that the various extremities reveal complete differences in outlook and expression of thought. The exaggerated nationalism of the Jewish race, however, would seem to be exceptional; but the anticipations of Western thought—(Plotinus, Anselm, Hegel)—disclosed by certain Eastern minds gives much food for thought. Philosophy as we know it, however, has very largely been the monopoly of the West, and this book shows moral intuition, mystical communion, and prophetic utterance to be more in harmony with the Eastern temperament. It is interesting to reflect, in this connection, that Plato's Academy in Athens was almost certainly flourishing at the same time as that in which the Hebrews achieved their golden age of prophecy.

The Tragic Hapsburgs

OF all the fateful, tragic lives of our time and the time before us, none can be more pitiful and picturesque than that of Elizabeth of Austria. She had in her the stuff of melodrama and romance; her life was comedy a little and tragedy in full. She believed herself predestined and, however hard she may have pushed destiny along its path as an architect of her own misfortunes, the student may understand and share her belief.

Married in haste and repenting at leisure; puppet of politics, pushed here and there by a husband-Emperor who still had to learn the rudiments of his job; often the fool of love, often scorched in the flame of passion; lovely, wayward, brilliant, romantic, with brains and temperament and an impregnable courage—here was the creature of fiction turned to fact in the fierce light that beats upon a throne.

Mrs. Larry Rue, in "A Caged Bird," by Maureen Fleming (Mrs. Larry Rue); Selwyn & Blount; 12/6, has chosen for her romantic and liberty-taking essay in historical perspective a figure that suits perfectly the method. The facts are here, the central facts that governed the fateful progress of the life and death of Elizabeth of Austria. Here are the life of the palace, the infidelities of husband and of wife, the misunderstandings and intrigues, the rebellion against the prisoned life of thrones; here is the story of Maximilian, sometime Emperor of Mexico, and the deep damnation of his taking off; here is the tragedy of Mayerling without any hankering after other explanations than that of a double suicide of Rudolph and his mistress; here is the interlude in the Irish hunting field; here is, of course, the end by the assassin's thrust on the shore of Lake Geneva.

But the virtue of it all is the story-teller's skill with which Mrs. Larry Rue makes it come alive. The method may be spasmodic or episodic and the style a little dotted and dashed after the manner of Morse. But Elizabeth, the heroine of the romance, lives so fully that events live too. As an introduction to a more painstaking study of the politics and policies of a period this book is like a cocktail before a serious lunch. As sheer romance and portrayal of emotion it has a lively and fascinating interest.

To Bomb or Not

[Much interest has been roused by Captain Harold Balfour's recent article on Aerial Bombing. The following are selections from some of the letters received.—Ed. S.R.]

SIR,—It is only human nature to shrink from the unpleasant and the painful; and whether it be purely physical, as when we shrink from the dentist, or moral when we play the role of Peter and shrink from taking a public stand for what we believe to be just, the reactions are similar.

Excellent reasons and well-measured arguments are produced not only to convince others, but to reassure oneself. Vagueness of thought regarding the true significance of the circumstances demanding action, and a concentration upon the unpleasant feature only of such action distort the true proportions; and the greater right goes by default in the light of a magnified but lesser evil inherent in the remedy.

Pacifists are of several classes. The first, to which we all belong, especially those who have any experience of war, longs for peace; but realises that peace is more assured when the peace-loving and law-abiding are strong.

A second class concentrates on the horrors of warfare, and entirely disregards the fact that the manhood of less peace-loving peoples not only despises such views but is in active opposition to them. This class would force us by unilateral disarmament into a position of impotence unique in our history. It contains many callow and juvenile supporters who can best be described as the immature thinkers of half-baked thoughts.

There is yet one other class, which calls for much less sympathy. Those who for one unworthy reason or another always place the interests of our enemies before our own; some no doubt are paid in coin or kind for their services.

To meet the joint attack of the last two classes of pacifist, we can only prove to the public at large the necessity for action having regard to the true circumstances requiring the action. We can never hope to convince the pacifist.

Is there likely to be a necessity for punitive action against insurgents in any part of the Empire, and are we within our full rights in taking such action? The answers are undoubtedly yes.

Air action does not cost more lives: it costs less. It is not more cruel to bomb a column of tribesmen than to shell them, only far more effective.

The people who protest would probably protest at any action, and only call for blood to be shed in class war, or in order to dictate to Japan how she shall behave in Manchuria.

Arbroath, Angus.

A. H. M. RAMSAY, M.P.

SIR,—Considerable confusion of thought has arisen in connection with the Government's decision to continue the use of aerial bombing for police purposes in outlying places in the Empire. It is perhaps not without significance that, for instance towards the close of the seventeenth century Liberal Administrations, despite growing discontent and the grumbling of the Tory squires, poured out with almost unlimited prodigality blood and treasure for Continental campaigns and much marching to and fro. English history would appear to show that radically minded politicians, together with present-day well-wishers of an international hue, expressed, generally speaking, less horror at the idea of war and the suffering consequently entailed prior to the effective and growing use of aircraft for military purposes. So long as fighting was limited to soldiers and mercenaries who bore the brunt of battle, bled, suffered and died, while the civilian population could and did continue their daily affairs in unchallenged security, few avowed pacifists troubled to raise their voices in public protest.

Modern "progress" has altered all that, and, simultaneously with the growth of civil and military air forces, the realisation that the civilian may in time of war be bombed from out of the blue has produced a school of thought in English politics which, owing to its natural

dread of this new menace from the air, demands its immediate and complete abolition. Unfortunately, many of these well-intentioned persons do not stop to consider the futility of the abolition of military aircraft—even were this practical international politics, which it is not—since within a few hours civil aeroplanes can be converted to bomb-carrying aircraft.

Critics of the Government on this question admit that on the North-West Frontier of India, as in many other outlying districts, aerial bombing restores for an indefinite period of time the power of effective intervention and control at a minimum cost both as regards casualties and pounds sterling. The only alternative to the use of air bombing in these regions, not merely as a weapon of defence but for police purposes, is the old-fashioned punitive expedition which dearly-bought experience has taught us proved a heavy financial burden, not to mention the infinitely greater toll of life, which latter was not restricted to the British forces concerned but applied to the attacking tribes as well to an even greater extent.

It is at this point, however, that the airy idealism of the well-wisher comes into play. As often as not devoid of administrative experience, it does not occur to him that these punitive expeditions may be dependent on roads, railways and other means of communication, and he glibly assumes that if vital and necessary they are always possible. Untold in number, however, are the square miles in the Middle and Far East which face the Imperial Administrator, responsible for the maintenance of safety and order, where there are no roads and where aeroplanes alone can deal effectively with the situation, or by their very presence (or even proximity) curtail and control the marauding activities of a recalcitrant chief to whom murder and rape are the salt of life.

PATRICK DONNER, M.P.

SIR,—I have considerable sympathy with the article recently published in the *Saturday Review* in which Capt. Harold Balfour, M.P., defends the Reservation in the British Disarmament Pact regarding Aerial Bombing. The abolition of this weapon of warfare would be highly detrimental to the interests of Great Britain under existing conditions for the following reasons:—

(1) Aerial bombing for police purposes in outlying areas is not only the most economical method of making war, but it saves the immense loss of life and constant hardship which the old-fashioned punitive expeditions always entailed. Long-drawn-out tribal warfare inflicts unnecessary suffering upon victors and vanquished alike, while a few bombs dropped judiciously upon hostile territory will often prevent a serious rising with a minimum of slaughter.

(2) Although during the Great War comparatively few submarines were sunk from the air, the very presence of bombing aeroplanes played a great part in forcing submarines to remain below water and innocuous. In the event of another war, this country would inevitably be starved to death by the blockade unless we had the Air Forces to counteract the submarine menace.

(3) If aerial bombing were temporarily abolished, it would certainly be revived when war broke out, and the consequent loss of skill during the intervening period would possibly add to the trials of the civilian population. One can envisage arrangements being made by which conflicting nations would agree to the concentration of their attack upon munition and naval bases. Such agreements could only prove satisfactory provided that the skill and accuracy of the opposing Air Forces were extremely high, otherwise the bases might escape while the sufferings of civilians would be worse.

Finally, I would emphasise that armaments are seldom a direct cause of war. Lack of efficient weapons has never prevented conflicts between nations, and never will.

Makeney Lodge, Derby.

VICTOR RAIKES.

CORRESPONDENCE

"The Strength of Islam"

SIR,—In your issue of February 11th, 1933, under the title of "The Strength of Islam" with regard to the results of missionary work in China, India, and Persia, there was a brief statement to the effect that due to the late nationalistic movements in Persia, Christianity is going backward.

If the purpose of the article was to set out the facts of the situation in Persia, which I take to be the case, I deem it my duty as one of the Christians of this country to state the true facts to the end that the readers of your esteemed periodical may be fully informed.

To-day Religious freedom is greater even than in the past. Persia has always tolerated religious minorities, but to-day this is more true than ever. Anyone is perfectly free to-day to embrace any religious opinion for the purpose of developing his spiritual life, which meets with the approval of his conscience and to follow out the tenets of that belief in any manner which he believes promotes his own worship of the divine Creator.

Christianity is peculiarly acceptable to the Persian because the essential teachings of Christ and their observance are in entire harmony with the genius, disposition and altruistic spirit of the Persian people. Persians are always seeking to improve themselves in knowledge and in their friendly relations with others.

Everyone looks upon the Christian religion with respect and tolerance; inside the Christian churches great improvement is noted in numbers, in zeal in communicating their faith, in strengthening of the belief of the members, in renewed conviction of their responsibility for evangelism, and their need for developing their fundamental relations with others socially and otherwise. All of those signs are a source of great joy and encouragement, giving the divine hope that the kingdom of God will illuminate in the immediate future the land of Persia.

In your article you made mention that among the Christians of China the antagonism to foreigners is greater than among those who are not Christians, and that the change in religion had not resulted in any more tolerant treatment by Chinese of Europeans. The Chinese are to a very great degree justified in taking the position they do because they expect nominal Christian nations who conceive it to be their duty to give the advantages of civilization that has grown up under Christian auspices to the rest of the world, to deal justly with the orientals with whom they come in contact, and when the orientals see that their conduct is contrary to the teachings of Christ they naturally have a wonder why such conduct should distinguish Christian nationals.

Finally, I would say to the distinguished writer of the article that the way for the inculcation of the teachings of Christ in Persia is open and that Christianity in Persia is steadily advancing; however, if after reading the above statement the author and publisher of the article is in doubt about the truth of my statements, I would earnestly invite him to come to this naturally beautifully Eastern country and see with his own eyes the condition of the Christian churches so that he may be convinced of the error of the views he has expressed.

Teheran.

AHMAD KHAN NAKHOSLEEN.

[We are greatly obliged to our correspondent for his interesting exposition. But a visit to Persia to study the condition of the Christian Churches—or even the equally controversial oil wells—is not immediately feasible.—EDITOR, *Saturday Review*.]

Survival?

SIR,—Mr. Osbert Burdett's metaphysics are surely a little disingenuous. He is perfectly entitled to claim that a materialist creed fails to solve such problems as survival as completely as religious dogma—which, by the way, is in this respect far older and more widespread than Roman Christianity—but he cannot properly call reason to his aid. To say, as he does, that "Since we

are thinking beings, we infer our universe to be rational; reason also infers that an effect cannot transcend its cause, that the less must proceed from the greater, that a thinking personality must be the creation of a personality who thinks," is merely to beg the question.

A different kind of reasoner will not accept any of these premises; nor is it reasonable to expect him to do so. Materialism may be drab creed; so is agnosticism—but colour is not everything, and it certainly is not a test of truth. Whenever a writer insists, as Mr. Burdett does, in putting inverted commas round the word "science," the reader may be certain that special pleading is coming, for science happens to be the dispassionate and impartial collation of observations; and the special pleader hates dispassionate observation, unless it happens to support his own thesis.

B.R.

Dorking.

The Green Ray

SIR,—In your issue of the 12th August you published a letter from Mr. Blathwayt, of Johannesburg, who claimed to correct your paragraph about the Green Ray. Mr. Blathwayt considers that you were wrong in attributing to the latter a purely subjective origin and claims that the phenomenon is due to "atmospheric dispersion." The point is that, on the basis of the accepted laws of optics, no mechanism of dispersion, or of atmospheric refraction can give any adequate account of what is actually observed. It is true that, at one time, an explanation was sought in this direction; but many reasons have led to the general acceptance of the idea of retinal fatigue; amongst them several mentioned by Mr. Blathwayt himself. Thus he states that he has seen the Green Ray many times, even in Cape Town. But others have not seen it, or the phenomenon would not be considered rare. Ergo it is subjective.

The colouration is generally green, the colour complementary to the red of the setting sun. This would be expected if it was due to retinal fatigue. But the setting sun is often orange. The complementary to this is a bluish green. Mr. Blathwayt says "sometimes it is a vivid blue." Again, it is essential that the setting sun be looked at fixedly. It certainly appears from his letter that Mr. Blathwayt has the habit of admiring sunsets or he would not have noticed the Green Ray so often.

Another point to be considered is that the phenomenon can be imitated in the laboratory, by filling a beaker with dilute caustic soda solution and adding a few drops of phenolphthalein. This gives an intensely red solution, which is then strongly illuminated. Now it is fixedly gazed at and then suddenly acidified. The spectators will claim that, immediately before the solution becomes colourless, it passes through a green stage.

If Mr. Blathwayt is interested he will find articles and papers dealing with this curious phenomenon in the "Annales Guébbard-Séverine" (Neuchâtel). C. Brenner has also published in the "Schweizer Lehrerzeitung" an interesting note "Der Gruene Blick." If your correspondent can explain the many details there quoted by means of his "atmospheric dispersion" I should be extremely interested.

J. A. LAUWERYS.

University of London, Institute of Education.

(CHEAP EDITION)

THE SURRENDER OF AN EMPIRE

By NESTA H. WEBSTER.

This book of 400 pages is a plain unvarnished record of the works of our politicians since 1914, which have brought us ever closer to ruin. It is not a pleasant tale, but it is retold with unerring pen, and is an invaluable political study.

Price, 7s. 6d.

THE BOSWELL PUBLISHING CO., LTD.
10, Essex Street, London, W.C.2

CITY.—BY OUR CITY EDITOR

THOUGH the August holiday period has made inroads upon the attendance on the Stock Exchange, there are no sign this year of the "doldrums" which usually becalm financial activity from July to September. The cheap money factor continues to dominate the gilt-edged market.

It is difficult to determine how far abnormality still exists, but the fact remains that the rentier is still suffering from all-round reduction of income upon his investments and this with an income-tax rate of 5s. in the £. An example is given this week of the benefit which some of the leading industrial concerns derive from present conditions by the conversion of the 5½ per cent. debentures of the Niger Company, amounting to over £3,300,000 into £2,750,000 of 4 per cent. debentures at the high price of 102. Though the new debentures are more or less of a gilt-edged industrial nature, being guaranteed by Lever Bros. in addition to the ample cover provided by the profits of the Niger Company, one is led to wonder whether the ability of industrial concerns to borrow at under 4 per cent. is entirely a good thing when one class of society is left to shoulder the whole burden of declining income without remission of taxation.

The Rise in Rails

It is only natural that such conditions should stimulate activity in the more speculative markets, and many holders of fixed interest investments, having realised either from compulsion or by choice, are entering the Home Railway market as offering the chance of some capital appreciation in conjunction with a slightly higher income in the future. When Home Railway prior charge stocks were for these reasons mentioned in these columns in mid-July, prices were well below present levels. G.W.R. 5 per cent. preference then looked attractive at 94, but the price is now nearly 101 ex the dividend. Southern 5 per cent. preference stands also at this price, compared with 96½ in July, and among the more speculative issues L.M.S. 4 per cent. preference 1923 have risen 13 points to 43, while L.N.E.R. first and second preference have gained no less than 11 and 7 points respectively, the prices now being 49 and 31. The ordinary stocks, too, have risen phenomenally, Southern Preferred having put on 14 points at 57½. Traffic returns of the four big groups have certainly been more satisfactory during recent weeks, and the figures for the August holiday period were good enough to warrant some buying of the stocks, but the Railways have still some leeway to make up even to reach last year's figures, and present prices of both ordinary and prior charge stocks seem to discount for some time ahead any probable improvement in earnings.

Industrial Preferences

While Home industrial ordinaries, like Home Railway stocks, have come in for a good deal of attention and prices appear quite high enough in many instances, the preference issues of the smaller concerns are a less active market and offer considerable attraction in the form of satisfactory yields and the prospect of increasing "cover" for capital and interest as the expected industrial revival materialises. In the case of industrial ordinaries, American buying is said to have been responsible for much of the rise which has taken place, but it is difficult to trace any actual purchases of note from across the Atlantic, and it is noteworthy that even when Wall Street advices are of a depressing nature some of the favourite industrials supposedly in demand on American account remain firm and active as ever.

Yields up to 5½ per cent.

At a time when British Funds return only 3½ per cent. or less, many investors of such a sum as say, £10,000, will be very content to obtain a yield of around 5 per cent. on a reasonable security with the chance of increased "cover" with any trade revival. Some £3,000 of Bradley's (Chepstow Place) 5½ per cent. cumulative preference have recently been available to return £4 17s. per cent., while nearly 4½ per cent. is obtainable on the 7 per cent. cumulative preference shares of Lewis's Investment Trust, which holds the ordinary shares of Lewis's Ltd., the well-known Liverpool stores.

A return of 5½ per cent. is obtainable on the 7 per cent. cumulative preference shares of J. Compton, Sons & Webb, of which £1,000 has been offering at 26s. 6d. The profits of this successful firm of uniform-makers cover the preference dividend about six times over and the return is, therefore, a good one. About £1,000 of Harrods 7½ per cent. cumulative preference stock at 32s. 9d. per £1 unit yields only just over 4½ per cent. on the money, but £5 8s. per cent. can be obtained on Montague Burton 6 per cent. "A" preference shares at 22s. 3d. Some £2,000 of these shares have been offering, and those who are interested in property investments may be attracted as Montague Burton divides its interests between property and tailoring. The dividend is covered nearly half-a-dozen times.

Maple's 6 per cent. cumulative preference shares at 23s. 6d. return well over 5 per cent., the dividend being about twice covered, but here the amount offering is, at the moment, only very small. J. Sears (True Form Boot Co.) have a 7 per cent. "A" cumulative preference share which gives over 5 per cent. to the investor. The dividend is covered about two and a half times, and the company controls some of the most important interests in the English boot industry. It will be seen that investments in the stocks mentioned give an average return of over 5 per cent.

NORTH BRITISH & MERCANTILE

INSURANCE Co., Ltd. Total Funds exceed £43,000,000. Total Income exceeds £10,742,000.

LONDON : 61, Threadneedle Street, E.C.2

EDINBURGH : 64, Princes Street.

FILMS

BY MARK FORREST

Bitter Sweet. Directed by Herbert Wilcox. Carlton.

My Lips Betray. Directed by John Blystone. Tivoli.

Damaged Lives. Directed by E. G. Ulmer. Coliseum.

I HAD thought that this week would provide something well worth remarking in the world of films, but two of the new pictures from which much was expected are extremely disappointing. Mr. Coward's "Bitter Sweet" was popular both here and in America and it may be that the film version, shown simultaneously at the Carlton and at a New York cinema, will be equally successful, but it does not deserve to be.

The story of Sari Linden formed the structure of the play, but Mr. Wilcox, by omitting the third act altogether and focussing the camera upon the second, has succeeded in once more bowdlerizing Vienna and making Manon, the cabaret singer, played by Ivy St. Helier, the centre of interest. How Sari Linden becomes the charming old lady, whose story is told for the benefit of the young lovers, is left to the imagination of the audience. The centre of gravity being thus changed the balance is lost.

Ivy St. Helier's performance is a clever one, but no actress on the screen should be employed to try and hold the attention of the audience through four or five songs while the picture stands still during the process. The pace, the charm and, to a great extent, the atmosphere of the original have been thrown away in this pictorial representation whose continuity is haphazard and whose cutting abrupt.

Most of the music is there, though "The Green Carnation" is, perforce, omitted, but its presence is arbitrary. Anna Neagle's performance, however, is excellent within the limits of her voice and Clifford Heatherley lifts the film up whenever he is there, but the whole business is slipshod and Mr. Coward is not the gainer.

Hollywood enticed Lilian Harvey away from Germany. The executive of the Fox films has apparently seen "Congress Dances" and it has also to find a rôle for John Boles; the result is "My Lips Betray," at the Tivoli. Mr. Lubitsch might have done something airy and amusing with this Cinderella theme, but Mr. Blystone's touch is altogether too heavy. John Boles is nearly as ponderous as he generally is, while Lilian Harvey seems to have lost a great deal of that naïve assurance which made her different from other screen actresses. If Hollywood continues to "groom" her she will probably lose the remainder and become as dull as—well, ditchwater.

The third new picture is in an entirely different category. "Damaged Lives," at the Coliseum, is a propaganda film, sponsored by the British Social Hygiene Council, and, I hope it will be shown throughout the British Isles. As a rule this sort of picture suffers from over-emphasis, but Mr. Ulmer has avoided the pitfall and the film stands out as a sincere piece of work with merits quite apart from its main object, which is to impress

upon people the dangers of venereal disease—in particular of syphilis. Doctor Bates winds up the proceedings with a very sensible lecture, made all the plainer by the use of diagrams.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 49

POET AS LETTER-WRITER UNSURPAST;
TINKER WHOSE BOOKS WHILE ENGLAND LIVES WILL LAST.
SURNAME AND WRITINGS HERE I HAVE COMBINED,
AND WHAT THEY ARE YOU EASILY WILL FIND.

1. Small, plump and coarse-fleshed, I inhabit rivers.
2. Core of a food supplied by dinner-givers.
3. Glory of English hedge-rows in the spring.
4. May gaze, the proverb tells us, on a king.
5. Heart of a slaughtered Midianitish lord.
6. This our ACROSTICS, as we trust, afford.
7. Matchless for music, but a trifle dear.
8. Gladly to me your sluggard lends an ear.
9. Pith of a drink on breakfast-tables found.
10. The Stone of Help that marked a battle-ground.
11. With this our ancestors shot down their foes.
12. Produced by women wont to wash our clothes.

SOLUTION OF ACROSTIC No. 48.

B	ooby-tra	P
d R		U m
A	l	L
Z	ea	L
I	nvisibl	E
L	ong-winde	D
N	e	Furious
U	top	Ia
T	riffin	G H
S	hameles	S a

¹ "His favourite maxim, *Vive la bagatelle*, is often quoted by Pope and Bolingbroke." Leslie Stephen's *Swift*, p. 197.

² "Shame being lost, all virtue is lost."—Latin Grammar.

The winner of Acrostic No. 47 (the first correct solution opened) is Mr. Bertram R. Carter, to whom a book will be sent.

THE GUILDHALL SCHOOL OF MUSIC

(Corporation of London)

VICTORIA EMBANKMENT, E.C.4.

Principal: SIR LONDON RONALD, F.R.A.M., F.R.C.M.
Tuition in a single subject from £2 a term. Dramatic Art and Elocution, Gesture, Fencing, Dancing, and Opera. Classes in Conducting. Complete Musical Education at inclusive fees, 12gns. and 14gns. per term. The Diplomas A.G.S.M. and L.G.S.M. and the Special Training Course for Teachers are recognised by the Teachers' Registration.

Evening Lessons up to 9 p.m. Amateur or Professional! Students may enter at any time. Over 80 Scholarships and Prizes. Prospectus and Syllabus of Local and Diploma Examinations free from:

H. Saxe Wyndham, Secretary.

Telephones: Central 4459. City 5566.

Autumn Term commences Monday, September 18th.

"Pity the Blind, but far, far better help this Hospital to prevent Blindness."

The WESTERN OPHTHALMIC HOSPITAL

MARYLEBONE, W.

NEEDS YOUR HELP!

Even a Churl will lend his Eyes to the BLIND

Broadcasting Notes

THE B.B.C. announces that the Big Programme Drive (sic) is about to begin. So the listener must stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood and prepare to grin and bear it.

And what fun it is all going to be. The Variety Director tells us all about it this week. To be candid, it does not make very exciting reading. It would seem that most of the old gang will be there, and I am not particularly hopeful that they will go "crazy" even under the adroit whip of Monsewer Eric Maschwitz. I am even unmoved at the prospect of hearing eight pretty girls sing and dance. The experiment was tried—and failed—in 1926. In any case, what possible difference can it make whether they are pretty or not?

The trouble is that some—or even all—of these programmes may turn out to be first rate, but Mr. Maschwitz will make the fundamental error of doing a lot of shouting before he has delivered the goods.

The storm of publicity which greeted his appointment as Variety Director earlier in the year

was little short of ludicrous, and here he is now, before his first programme has been heard, telling us that he is going to give us "sixteen hours a week chock-full of vitality." Nothing could be in worse taste or more calculated to make one cringe than this sort of journalistic flappedoodle. It is all too hearty for words.

For goodness sake, Mr. Maschwitz, let us hear some of your programmes first. We shall then be able to make up our own minds as to whether they are "chock full of vitality" or not, and, more important still, whether we really want to be banged on the back for sixteen hours a week.

Let it not be thought for one moment that I do not believe in Mr. Maschwitz's capabilities and that he is the right man for the job. I do emphatically. But I do believe he is putting himself in a false position by allowing all this ballyhoo to be printed about himself and his department. If he goes on like this I shall have to reconsider my Christmas present to him. Instead of the usual box of cigars I shall send him a megaphone and a bang on the back for himself.

ALAN HOWLAND.

Public Schools

HAILEYBURY COLLEGE

AN Examination will be held on October 26th, 26th and 27th, for eight Entrance Scholarships, value from £100 to £30, for boys under 14 on 31st December, 1933. For details apply The Bursar, Haileybury College, Hertford.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, EXETER

PREPARES for external London Degrees. Residential, three men's and three women's hostels. Playing fields, own estate 140 acres. Holiday course for Foreigners (residential) August 1st to 25th, English-speaking members admitted. Apply Registrar.

POLTIMORE, COLLEGE, NEAR EXETER

FOR daughters of professional people, established to meet the present urgent need for a school at moderate fees. Adequate staff of University women to ensure individual coaching where necessary. Preparation for School certificate university entrance, R.A.M. and R.C.M., commercial and domestic science courses. Grounds of 300 acres. School chapel. Separate school infirmary. Resident fully trained nurse. Scientifically balanced menus, varied weekly. Fruit, vegetables, butter, milk and eggs from College farm. Herd of tuberculin tested Guernsey cows.

Fees £115 per annum, inclusive of all extras.

For prospectus, views, and references apply Secretary to the Headmistress.

COLONEL and Mrs. WINDHAM, of Arlesey Bury, near Hitchin, Herts, invite PARENTS to visit their HOME SCHOOL. Two vacancies. First-class tuition. Moderate fees. Healthy situation; 15 acres; own cows; riding; pets. Entire charge.

TO GARDEN LOVERS

The "All Handy" Gadget,

a small Portable Stand, will hold all your necessary requisites.

NO MORE LOST TOOLS.

The latest joy in gardening, so the best gift to give yourself and your friend.—All Handy. Woodsome, Hyde, I.O.W. Price 5/6, packed in case and carriage paid.

Hotels

BUXTON. Spa Hotel. Telephone: 211. Telegrams: "COMFORTABLE."

COTSWOLDS.—The Old Bakehouse, Stanway, near WIMBORNE, Glos.

DROITWICH SPA. Park Hotel. Telephone: Droitwich 33.

DROITWICH SPA. Raven Hotel. Telephone: Droitwich 50.

FRESHWATER.—Freshwater Bay Hotel, Freshwater, Isle of Wight. Telephone 47.

MATLOCK, ROCKSIDE. The favourite all-the-year Hydro. Prosp. Free. Ph. Matlock 312. Tel. Rockside, Matlock.

OXFORD. A small and unexpectedly good hotel where every visitor feels welcome. Special week-end terms. The Castle Hotel. Tel.: 2844.

SOUTHWOLD. Swan Hotel. 'Phone: 5.

SOUTHWOLD. Crown Hotel. 'Phone: 53.

EASTBOURNE (near Wish Tower).—Superior Board-Residence. Every comfort.—Miss Maxwell, 27, Jevington Gardens, Eastbourne.

WINTER UNDERWEAR FOR THRIFTY BUYERS.—Far below any shop prices, because supplied direct-by-post from Makers. Send post card for Illustrated Catalogue and FREE PATTERNS of lovely "B-P" Underwear, Britain's finest value. Prices lowest-ever in spite of sensational rise in wool. Any style—any size; for Women, Children, Men. Out-sizes a speciality. Pure Wool, or Mixtures. Beautifully soft, silky, warm, long-lasting. GUARANTEED against shrinkage. Complete satisfaction or money refunded. Write to Birkett & Phillips Ltd., (Dept. R.V.) Union Road, Nottingham.

For Sale

A Charming 15TH CENTURY HOUSE

Completely unspoiled, yet with Modern Conveniences

IN MANCHESTER SQUARE

4 Reception rooms, 8 Bed and Dressing rooms, 2 Bathrooms, excellent offices. Direct Lease at Moderate Rent.

TO BE SOLD.

Sole Agents:

HAMPTON & SONS

20, ST. JAMES'S SQUARE, S.W.1. (Whitehall 6767)

DAVID DELANDER Watch for sale, outside case worn away, but inside intact. Particulars: W.J.F., c/o "Saturday Review," 18, York Buildings, Adelphi, W.C.

ADVANCES on REVERSIONS, Life Interests, Settlements and personal security; Percy G. Coleman, 17, Hanover Square, London, W.1. (Mayfair 1746).

THE SATURDAY REVIEW

FOUNDED 1855. WEEKLY 6d.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Post free, 30/- per annum

ADVERTISEMENT RATES

Publishers and Appeals £12 0 0 per page (12/- per inch pro rata).
Trade and General £14 0 0 per page (14/- per inch pro rata).

Solus positions by arrangement £16 per page
Series discount 24% for 6 insertions
5% for 13 "
10% for 26 "

PRESS DAY — Wednesday Evening.
Half Tones 65 Screen Page 10in. by 6in.

18, YORK BUILDINGS, ADELPHI, W.C.2.
Telephone: TEMPLE BAR 3157.